

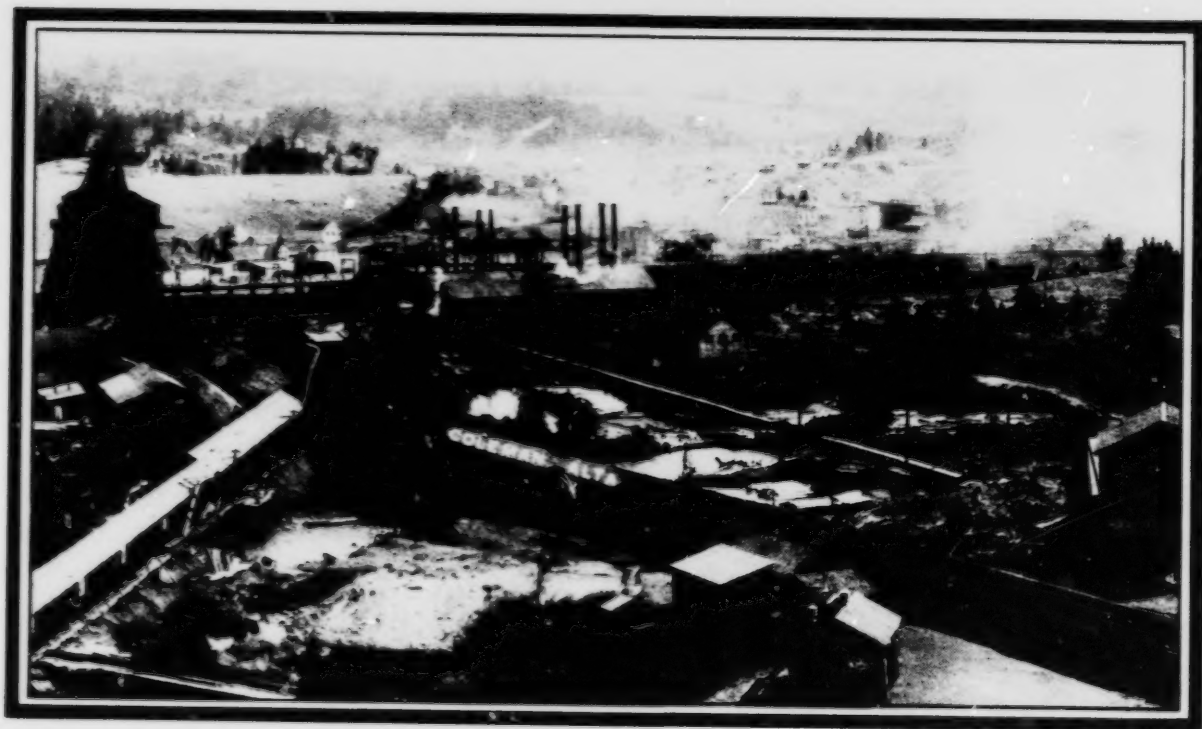
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THE COAL MINING INDUSTRY IN THE CROW'S NEST PASS

1985

Compiled by Sharon Babaian
from research papers by Lorry Felske



Alberta
CULTURE

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Historic Sites Service

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PREFACE

This report examines some of the factors that contributed to the rapid rise and fall of so many coal companies on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Of the twelve mining companies that had been established in the region by 1909, only five were still operating after 1915. By 1915, six of the ten communities that had grown up around the mines had either been absorbed by others or were struggling for survival. The dramatic rise of the industry was due primarily to the economic boom of the opening years of this century. The rapid expansion of settlement, and agricultural and industrial development in the Canadian west created a good climate for mining development, attracting successful, wealthy, and ambitious entrepreneurs. Yet, while the economy initially provided a very positive atmosphere for investment and industrial expansion, it also in large part caused the decline and closure of many of the mines. When the boom ended abruptly in 1913, the contracting market could no longer support twelve coal companies and a number were forced out of business.

This report is a compilation of a number of research reports on coal mining in the Alberta Crow's Nest Pass prepared for Alberta Culture, Historic Sites Service. These reports included several works by Lorry W. Felske and one by Janet Kennedy. The works were compiled and edited by Sharon Babaian. Special thanks are due to the members of the Crowsnest Pass Historical Corridor Advisory Committee, who took the time to give the manuscript a careful review before it proceed to printing.

The reseachers consulted a wide range of sources. Several collections were of particular importance. The papers of the provincial Mines Branch (Provincial Archives of Alberta) were very useful as they include files on each mine company in addition to information on the whole region. Important information about the companies and the miners was obtained from the records of the Western Coal Operators Association

(Glenbow-Alberta Institute). The proceedings of the various Alberta Coal Commissions, especially that of 1907, were also a very good source for the views of the participants in the industry. Some companies, such as the Crow's Nest Pass Coal and Coke Company and West Canadian Collieries, left collections (Glenbow-Alberta Institute) which provided interesting details of the industry's development.

The papers of the secondary participants also proved useful. The C.P.R. Papers (Glenbow-Alberta Institute), the Great Northern Railway Papers (Minnesota Historical Society, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota), the records of the federal Departments of Labour and of the Interior (Public Archives of Canada), the records of the United States Consular Post at Fernie, B.C. (National Archives, Washington, D.C.), and the papers of the provincial Attorney General's Department all offered commentary and analysis of the problems of the mines in the Pass.

Various newspapers were also consulted extensively. These included the Blairmore Enterprise, the Frank Paper, the Frank Sentinel, the Bellevue Times, the Lethbridge Herald, the Calgary Herald, the Fernie Free Press, and the Cranbrook Herald.

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Introduction

"IF EVER THERE WAS A RAILWAY THROUGH THAT COUNTRY"¹

The modern history of the Crow's Nest Pass region of Alberta is inseparable from the development of the coal mining industry there. Exploitation of the area's large bituminous deposits was sparked by the activities of a number of entrepreneurs and investors from British Columbia, the northwestern United States, eastern Canada, and Europe, who believed that a profitable industry could be established in the Pass. Their great hopes for mining development were, however, dependent upon the construction of a transportation system to carry the coal to its intended markets: the hard rock smelters of eastern British Columbia and the northwestern United States. When the Canadian Pacific Railway line connecting southern Alberta and British Columbia was completed in 1898, it not only provided contact with the smelting market but also created an additional demand for coal to fuel its steam engines.

Encouraged by these developments and by the accompanying predictions of progress, entrepreneurs began to purchase the coal rights to the lands on the Alberta side of the Pass. Because these lands were divided into small sections based on the township grid system, ownership of the coal rights was within the grasp of the smaller companies and many did make an attempt at coal mining. In the first decade of the twentieth century at least twelve different companies began mining operations in the Pass. They dug entry ways and constructed surface buildings, coke ovens, and spur lines to process the coal and carry it to the main rail line. Towns were planned and stores and cottages built to house and service the mine workers. Ten communities rose out of the wilderness before World War I: Frank, Lille, Coleman, Bellevue, Hillcrest, Burmis, Passburg, Lundbreck, Blairmore, and Beaver Mines.

The people who watched or took part in this rapid development could hardly be blamed for expecting the progress to continue. In spite of

such intermittent tragedies as the Frank Slide and the Hillcrest Mine explosion of 1914, predictions of prosperity, expansion, and continuous development filled the local newspapers. Yet by the end of World War I all but four coal companies operating on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass had ceased operations and six of the ten towns were struggling or had already collapsed. The companies that survived the war were the large ones which, with the decline of so many other operations, were able to grow even larger, further diminishing opportunities for the small entrepreneur.

The purpose of this study is to explain why the fortunes of these coal companies rose and fell so dramatically in the opening decades of the twentieth century. To a large extent, the explanation is found in the manner in which the industry was first established and developed on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass. In order to understand fully the experience of Alberta companies, however, it is first necessary to discuss certain aspects of early industrial development in British Columbia. Mining activity there initially drew attention to the substantial coal deposits of the Pass.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the whole area was still a wilderness of forests and mountains. Prospectors searching for gold along Wild Horse Creek in British Columbia were the first non-native inhabitants of the region.² When these finds ran out, many of the prospectors stayed on to look for more gold and other valuable minerals. One prospector, Michael Phillips,³ explored the area east of Galbraith's Ferry into the Elk River valley. Travelling north up the valley, Phillips explored and named the tributaries from the east that emptied into the Elk River. Numerous coal outcroppings were exposed by these creeks, one of which, Michel Creek, followed the valley that revealed the Crow's Nest Pass. In his search for valuable minerals, Phillips had found not only coal deposits but also a pass through the Rocky Mountains.⁴

Phillips' discovery of the Crow's Nest Pass and the coal deposits in British Columbia focused attention on the area at the same time as the

Canadian Pacific Railway debated the best route for its transcontinental line through the Rocky Mountains. In 1881, a C.P.R. crew surveyed the area, but its proximity to the American border precluded further consideration.⁵ Interest in the area continued, however, despite its disadvantage as a transportation route. In 1880 and 1881 the Geological Survey of Canada examined the region and in 1882 Dr. George Dawson made a preliminary assessment of the economic potential of the Pass coal deposits.⁶ Dawson confirmed that the deposits were very large but it was clear that, at the time, no sound market existed for the coal.

In the early 1880s, the hard rock mines and smelters of eastern British Columbia and the northwestern United States were still in the earliest stages of development and settlement throughout the Pass region was limited. On the Alberta side, a handful of ranchers and pioneers made up the sparse population. William Lee was one early inhabitant who was interested in the region as ranch land.⁷ Moving to Lees Lake from Pincher Creek in 1882, Lee operated a 25,000 acre ranch on leased land with 2000 head of cattle. About this time he discovered coal (and was the first to do so on the Alberta side of the Pass) in an oatfield near the future site of Blairmore. For him, the Pass had economic potential only as grazing land for his herd. Development of the coal deposits would have disrupted his and other ranching operations.⁸

It was not until the late 1880s and the 1890s that interest in the coal deposits of the Pass reached an active stage. Development began on the British Columbia side of the Pass where the hard rock mining and smelting industries were growing rapidly. Since 1882 five mining areas had been opened in eastern British Columbia. Near Nelson, the Kootenay Lake and Toad Mountain mines were productive in the 1880s,⁹ while south and west of Nelson in the Trail area, several mines and a smelter were operational by the mid-1890s.¹⁰ In the same period mines and smelters began operations in the Slocan, Boundary, and East Kootenay districts.¹¹ As these industries expanded, so too did the demand for coal to fuel the surface machinery and for coke to heat the smelters. Both their proximity and their apparent size made the Crow's Nest Pass reserves the logical source.

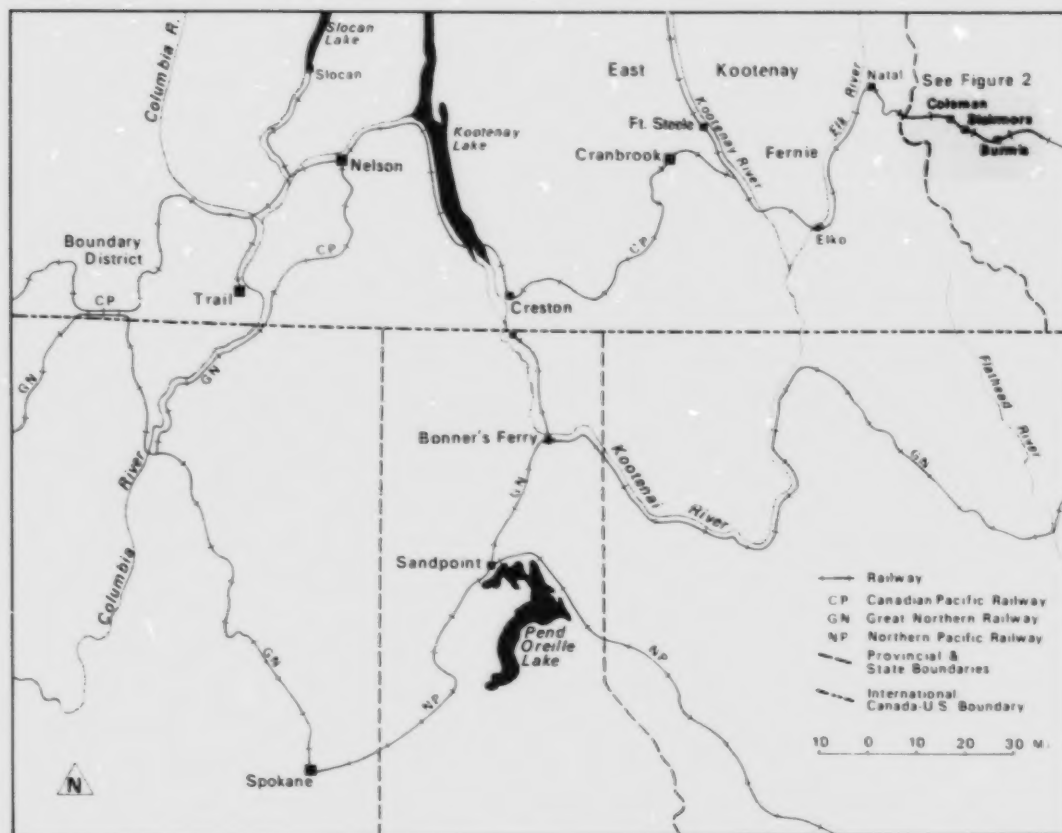


Figure 1:
Mining regions of southern British Columbia

Anxious to connect the promising coal supplies of the Pass with a market, prospective developers agitated for the construction of a railway in the area. Although anyone with an economic interest in the region would have welcomed a rail link, those who controlled coal property on the British Columbia side of the Pass initiated and directed the drive for a Crow's Nest Pass railway. Unlike the hard rock mining companies that already had outlets, however inconvenient, through which to ship their products and obtain their supplies, these coal interests could not become economically viable without an east-west rail link.¹²

As early as 1888, efforts were underway to obtain that railway. In that year William Fernie,¹³ a resident of Fort Steele (formerly Galbraith's Ferry), and a group of associates led by E. Bray, moved to secure a railway charter for the Crow's Nest and Kootenay Lake Railway Company. Control of this enterprise rested with the syndicate's newly formed Crow's Nest Pass Mineral Company which by 1890 controlled in excess of 7,800 acres of coal claims in British Columbia.¹⁴

The Fernie syndicate, whose members included Colonel James Baker and other provincial politicians,¹⁵ was awarded the building rights for the railroad from Crow's Nest Summit to Kootenay Lake.¹⁶ Originally no land subsidy was included other than a 90-foot right-of-way and land for stations. In 1890, though, a provincial railway act granted the group 20,000 acres of land per constructed mile, the option of choosing land away from the rail line, and the mineral rights to the land chosen. The completion deadline was extended two years from 1891 to 1893. One year later, in 1891, the company changed its name to the British Columbia Southern Railway and received additional concessions. In 1893, still more privileges were added to the terms of the agreement and the deadline for completion extended.¹⁷

In the winter of 1892-93 survey work began on the proposed rail line and, over the next eighteen months, ninety miles of track were laid. As well, the company cleared sixteen miles of right-of-way and laid thousands of ties alongside the rail bed.¹⁸ Yet, despite this progress and the generous concessions granted to the Fernie group, they were unable to

continue work on the line. The sharp economic downturn of the 1890s in conjunction with the federal government's refusal to grant an additional subsidy of \$3,200 per mile probably prompted the one source of private capital committed to the project to withdraw. When T. Howland of Toronto and C. Hanson of Montreal removed their funding,¹⁹ the syndicate tried unsuccessfully to sell the project and its attractive subsidies to Augustus Heinze, an American mining magnate.²⁰

As economic prosperity returned, a group of Toronto capitalists assumed control of the railway company and its charter. The group included Elias Rogers, Henry Pellatt, Robert Jaffray, and Senator G. Cox. Cox soon emerged as the dominant figure.²¹ In order to open the Crow's Nest Pass area, they resolved to separate the goal of further rail construction from that of coal deposit development. The Cox group attempted to attract a railway contractor with the lucrative land grants attached to the charter. As early as 1895 there were signs that a builder had been found. That year, ten sacks of Crow's Nest Pass coal were shipped to the east, presumably to be tested by the prospective contractor for its potential market value.²² By March of 1896 rumours of the negotiations for the line reached the House of Commons and a Winnipeg member, Joseph Martin, openly accused the Conservative government of preserving the area for the C.P.R. In the end, the C.P.R. undertook to build the Crow's Nest Pass line but the terms of the agreement had to be altered when the huge land grants and generous concessions originally attached to the charter were offered to a company already resented for its great wealth and power.²³

As a storm of criticism arose over the proposed agreement, the federal Conservatives, now in opposition, called for the disallowance of the provincial acts that granted the concessions.²⁴ The provincial and federal governments were both forced to respond to the controversy. Laurier, who had been elected at least in part because of his support for provincial rights in the Manitoba Schools Questions, was anxious to avoid use of the federal power of disallowance. He sought a more moderate solution. The government of British Columbia helped by quickly passing an Ambiguity Bill which struck out a "clerical error" in the 1894 railway

bill that had added eight million acres to the land subsidy.²⁵ Laurier left the land grants alone and offered the C.P.R. an additional cash subsidy of \$11,000 per mile in return for lower freight rates on certain goods. The Crow's Nest Pass freight rate agreement lowered rates on settlers' effects coming west and on grain and flour leaving the region. Finally, to prevent the Cox group from dominating coal production in the area, the Liberal government received 50,000 acres of coal-bearing land. The lands could be opened to development if the Cox group, now called the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, monopolized the area's coal production. In spite of this effort at control, the company was to become and to remain the dominant force in the coal industry on the British Columbia side of the Pass.²⁶

In March 1897, contracts had been let for the construction of the Crow's Nest Pass railway from Lethbridge in the Northwest Territories to Kootenay Lake, British Columbia. Construction began within five months. The C.P.R., encouraged by the Canadian government, was anxious to complete the line quickly to prevent penetration by an American railroad into the area. Of particular concern was the Great Northern, which ran very near to the international border and had many sympathizers in Canada. One resident of Pincher Creek, F. W. Godsall, implored the Great Northern to "come over and help us",²⁷ and his invitation was supported by other local residents. Two years later he and a group of entrepreneurs received a charter to build a rail line along the eastern slopes of the Rockies to the international boundary. Poking branch lines into the coal areas along the route the line was an obvious attempt to connect with the Great Northern.²⁸

The rail link to the south was, however, never built. Still determined to bring the Great Northern into southern Alberta, Godsall suggested that the American company had a good chance of getting running rights on the C.P.R.'s Crow's Nest Pass line. Apparently the newly elected member for Alberta, Liberal Frank Oliver, also supported this arrangement, as did the Winnipeg law firm of Ewart, Fisher, and Wilson. Despite these entreaties, the managers of the Great Northern concluded that the chances of "any newcomer securing privileges . . . against the interests of the

Canadian Pacific" were "doubtful". J. J. Hill, owner of the Great Northern, anticipated "the occupation north of the border by the C.P.R.", and favoured the "consolidation of Great Northern and Northern Pacific interests south of the line." He dismissed the idea of new development in Canada "on account of customs regulations and other embarrassments."²⁹

Nevertheless, some in the mining business remained convinced that the Great Northern was interested in the area. In 1897, a Chicago mine promoter addressed his enquiries about the region directly to the railroad company. He apparently assumed that there was little the Great Northern did not know about the area. He asked about hotel accommodations and cabins, the number of people and businesses and any other indications of the potential for development there.³⁰

Constantly aware of the threat of the Great Northern and other American intrusions into the area, the C.P.R. proceeded rapidly with construction of its line. As no one firm was large enough to undertake the entire construction project, the manager, Michael J. Harvey, oversaw work by a number of contractors assigned to ten mile sections. The hope was that this approach would facilitate rapid progress.³¹ This it did, but it also created certain problems. Using numerous contractors meant that wages and living conditions varied considerably along the route. Workers often had only tents and blankets to shield them from the sub-zero spring nights and more than a few of them died from some form of virus contracted in these harsh conditions.³²

Obtaining payment for work also proved to be difficult for both contractors and their employees. The C.P.R.'s payments to its contractors were generally low and infrequent. For the first three or four months nothing was paid to contractors and when workers received cheques they were forced, because there were no banks, to pass them to scalpers who gave them only 10 to 50 per cent of their actual value.³³ Moreover, the drive for rapid completion and the use of many builders produced uneven standards of construction. The first riders on the line reported the roadbed "fearfully rough" and people "taken with



Figure 2:

C. N. Wellman's grading outfit, Coal Creek section

Crow's Nest Pass, May 20, 1898

(Fort Steele Historic Park Archives)

land-sea-sickness from the rocking of cars."³⁴ As well, to rush the line to completion, some bridges, one over the Old Man River and one over the St. Mary's, were made of wood instead of iron. The government also permitted the use of old rails from the C.P.R. main line.

Quick construction, however, was the primary goal and this, clearly, was achieved. Construction had begun in July of 1897 and by August 1898, trains could steam into Coal Creek, British Columbia. In the fall of 1898, the line stretched a total of 325 miles from Lethbridge to Kootenay Landing.³⁵

Having worked so hard to obtain a railway line through their coal lands, the owners of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company wasted little time in developing the deposits. Shortly after construction had begun on the Crow's Nest Pass line, they started mining operations at Coal Creek, British Columbia. In December 1897, twenty Welsh miners from Nova Scotia were brought to the mine by the company's first general manager, William Blakemore.³⁶ By August 1898 when the C.P.R. arrived at Coal Creek, these men had driven 4000 feet of underground tunnels and extracted 10,000 tons of coal. One hundred car loads of mine equipment and material to be used in further development sat waiting on the rail line between Winnipeg and Fort MacLeod. By 1899, coal production had reached 300-400 tons daily and construction had been completed on at least fifty coke ovens.³⁷ Two years later, average daily production reached 1000-1600 tons, and some 360 coke ovens were operating. As one observer noted, "the amount of work accomplished almost surpasses belief."³⁸

The completion of the C.P.R.'s Crow's Nest Pass line made possible the great success of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company in British Columbia. Both of these developments influenced the growth of the coal industry on the Alberta side of the Pass. The new rail link with the rest of Canada certainly helped the region's economy. Established industries, like hard rock mining and smelting, could not but profit from the wider market opened to them. As well, the opening of yet another rail line presented the possibility of a greater demand for coal to fuel the trains. Moreover, the construction of the rail line had itself encouraged

entrepreneurs like general contractors and lumber suppliers. By the time the line was complete, it had attracted a group of individuals, particularly in the British Columbia Pass region, who had access to a ready supply of investment capital and who wanted a promising place to invest it.³⁹ The coal industry seemed such a place but these men were prevented from investing in the burgeoning coal mines of British Columbia by the dominance of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company. Increasingly, therefore, these small entrepreneurs and investors turned their attention to the undeveloped coal reserves on the Alberta side of the Pass. Here the township grid system of land division facilitated the purchase of small packages of coal rights enabling development by a greater number of small entrepreneurs.

Actual development in Alberta, however, did not begin in earnest until 1901. Prior to that time, coal markets were well supplied by existing mines. The Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company was meeting the needs of the smelters and hard rock mines of eastern British Columbia and the northwestern United States. E. T. Galt's Lethbridge mine serviced the southern region of the Northwest Territories and the C.P.R. while the Canmore and Anthracite mines supplied domestic and railway demands further north. By 1901, however, new demands were being placed on coal mines. Settlement on the prairies was increasing and it seemed likely that this would continue. Domestic requirements were gradually cutting into the railway supply. Moreover, the railways required more and more coal as their new lines extended further across the prairies.

Aware of these emerging markets, an American prospector, C. A. Little, leased some property near Burmis. Having seen the area in 1890 and been impressed by "the wonderful coal measures of Alberta," he decided that "if ever there was a railway through that country" he would try to "open a coal mine there."⁴⁰ True to his word, Little eventually leased the Burmis property and convinced Butte mining magnate H. L. Frank that it was worth developing. In 1899, Frank sent S. W. Gebo to develop the Burmis mine. After sinking a 486-foot shaft, Gebo encountered dirty coal in a seam that showed signs of pinching out and, reluctantly, abandoned the property.⁴¹

Not willing to give up on coal mining after one unsuccessful attempt, Gebo and Frank sought more hopeful prospects near the Sulphur Springs east of Blairmore. Originally discovered by a group of prospectors headed by Henry S. Pelletier, these properties were purchased by Frank and Gebo for \$30,000. They then formed the Canadian American Coal and Coke Company.⁴² Work started on this site, first known as the Blairmore Springs Coal Mine, in December of 1900. By the summer of 1901, the first productive coal mine on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass was open. The mine and the new town were eventually named Frank and work on both proceeded quickly. As one local newspaper editor noted, "what was one year ago the haunt of the deer, where the howl of the coyote was heard nightly, is now a hive of industry, furnishing homes and employment for hundreds of families."⁴³ During the summer and fall of 1901, twenty-four miners' cottages, a bunkhouse, a school building, saloons, and tent stores appeared. Plans were also laid for a three-storey, 6000 square foot sanitorium at the Sulphur Springs⁴⁴ and it was claimed that the residence built for mine manager Gebo was one of the finest in Alberta if not the whole North West.⁴⁵

The C.P.R., anxious to develop new coal supplies, actively encouraged the efforts of Gebo and Frank. R. Barnwell, the C.P.R.'s Fuel and Tie agent at the time, later recalled that without coal from the Frank mine the C.P.R. "would, during the winter months, have had to haul Pittsburg [sic] coal from Fort William to Swift Current, a distance of 936 miles against 341 miles from Frank."⁴⁶ Moreover, Galt coal cost the C.P.R. \$2.50 per ton, while Frank coal, which had a better calorific or heat-producing quality, cost only \$1.70 per ton. Consequently, even though the first engineers to use it (on the Moose Jaw to Medicine Hat line) found Frank coal extremely difficult to fire, they were pressured to continue using it until they learned how to fire it successfully.⁴⁷

Shortly after the mine at Frank opened, work began on a site in the valley to the north. Initiated by a British company, the United Gold Fields of British Columbia, development there depended upon construction of seven miles of rail line and thus coal production did not commence until August 1903.⁴⁸ The company, under the direction of Frenchmen

Jules Justin Fleutot and Charles Remey, was forced to seek additional investment capital to offset high development costs, especially the cost of building the spur line. In France they obtained an initial capitalization of \$400,000 for their company, now called West Canadian Collieries Ltd. Soon after that, capitalization was raised to \$720,000.⁴⁹ This new infusion of capital and the encouragement of the C.P.R. enabled the company to continue operations at Lille and to open new mines at Bellevue in 1904⁵⁰ and Blairmore in 1909. Ultimately, West Canadian Collieries Ltd. was to become one of the most successful mining companies in the Alberta Pass region.

Other companies soon joined Canadian American Coal and Coke Company and West Canadian Collieries in the promising business of coal mining in the Pass. At Lundbreck, the Breckenridge and Lund Co. began mining operations in 1903 although production did not reach significant levels until 1906. Early in 1905, the Hillcrest Coal and Coke Company established its mine southeast of Bellevue, exposing coal seams of very high quality. Two years later, new mines were opened in Lundbreck by the Galbraith Coal and Coke Company, in Passburg by Leitch Collieries Ltd., in Bellevue by the Maple Leaf Coal Company, and in Coleman by International Coal and Coke Company Ltd. In 1909, three more companies began work in the area: Western Oil and Coal Consolidated opened Beaver Mines, the Davenport Coal Company started a mine at Burmis, and the McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company began operations at Coleman.

To a certain extent, the actions of the C.P.R. encouraged this rapid and extensive development of the coal lands on the Alberta side of the Pass. The company had gone out of its way to see that the Frank mine was firmly established and, soon after, the second vice president of the C.P.R. stated that he was "deeply interested in the prosperity and building up generally of this western country". With this in mind, he personally acted to see "encouragement . . . given to the further development of the mines of the West Canadian Colliery Company . . . and the International Coal and Coke Company at Coleman."⁵¹

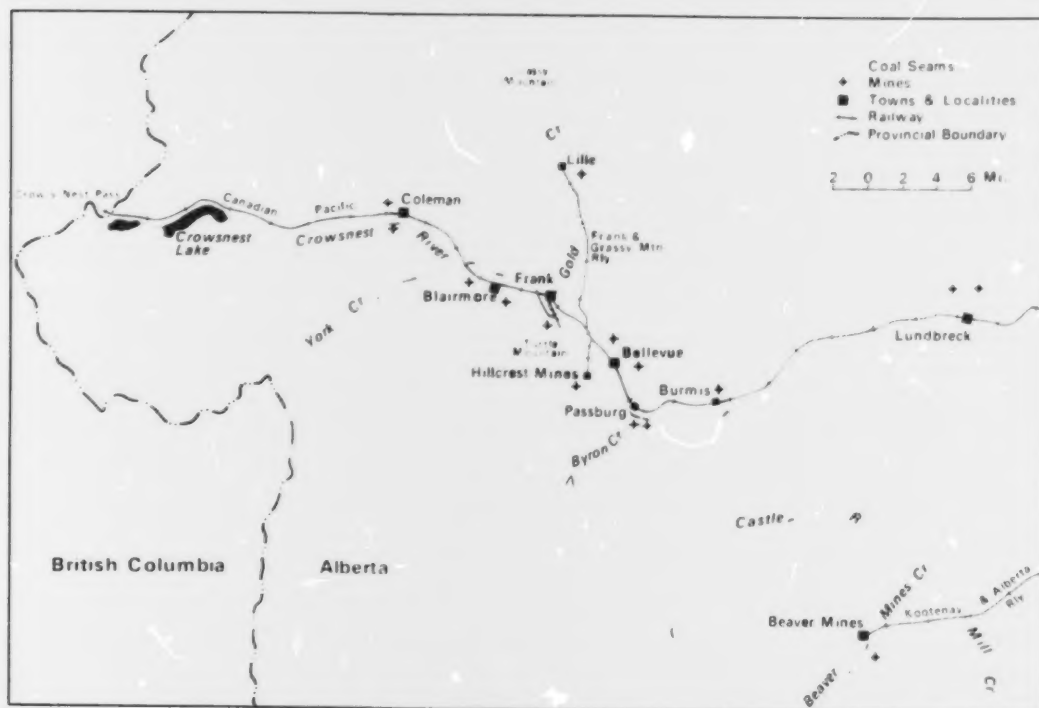


Figure 3:
The Crow's Nest Pass coal area, Alberta

More important than these interventions, however, was the general economic climate of the time. Great prosperity tended to create a high level of entrepreneurial enthusiasm among businessmen. Such an outlook did not inspire careful consideration of the markets and their limitations or the potential for overdevelopment. Present and predicted economic expansion seemed the only relevant consideration to many coal entrepreneurs.

Optimism about the Pass coal industry was also fed by the high quality of the region's coal. It was a medium volatile bituminous coal with a low ash and moisture content suitable for both coking and steaming. Moreover, the coal lay in accessible seams that ran north and south at right angles to the main rail line. This permitted many seams to be exposed and worked at one time and kept transportation costs from mine to rail line minimal for most mines. Thus, a number of companies of various sizes were able to establish mines and entertain hopes for success.

In spite of this optimistic outlook, however, significant problems faced these coal entrepreneurs from the outset. The financial difficulties of an expensive business regularly challenged companies on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass. In 1903, J. J. Fleutot of West Canadian Collieries was forced to search out a new source of investment capital and to beg an extension on the second payment due the federal government on his company's coal leases in the Pass.⁵² Similar, if not identical, problems plagued most other Pass mining companies.

Moreover, the unique geology of the area, while offering certain advantages for development, also presented significant operational problems. These, in turn, complicated the finances of the companies. The coal seams of the region proved difficult and at times dangerous to mine. They lay at steeply pitched angles, did not generally follow continuous paths, and contained lethal pockets of methane gas.⁵³ Not only did these circumstances greatly increase the risk of accidents and disasters, they also added to the cost of day to day operations. The steep pitch of the seams meant that labour-saving machinery was too heavy to be held at an angle against the coal face. Consequently, underground

operations in the Pass were labour intensive and more costly than in many other mines.⁵⁴ As well, the pitch of the seams and their irregularity determined that the room and pillar rather than the longwall method of mining would have to be used. This method required more timber to support the roofs, another added cost. To disperse excessive amounts of gas, ventilation also had to be carefully maintained.

Added to the high cost of labour underground was the price of mechanization above ground, where managers sought to make up for the slow pace of manual extraction by introducing the latest, most efficient processing equipment. Unable to control the cost of such equipment, mine companies attempted to regulate the cost of labour. Relations between mine workers, especially miners, and management were therefore not good.⁵⁵ Labour disputes were common and, like any other break in production, they presented the possibility of loss of markets to competitors.

The fluctuating coal market itself posed a serious problem for entrepreneurs. Not only was it dependent on the general state of the economy, but it was also influenced by such unpredictable matters as the fortunes of the hard rock mines and smelters, the continued expansion of the railways, and the winter weather across the prairies.⁵⁶ Assuming that a market for their coal existed, the mining companies still could not be certain that it would ever reach that market. Even with construction of the C.P.R.'s Crow's Nest line, transportation of coal remained a problem in the Pass. In particular, car shortages were a constant concern because, without a steady and adequate supply of rail cars, mine owners were often forced to suspend operations.⁵⁷ Any number of circumstances could cause shortages: bad weather, track repairs, accidents, grain harvest car demand, labour problems, and poor spur line facilities. One Burmis observer saw the congestion at the local siding and concluded that "old Euclid himself could not solve the problem of how to switch box cars when all the tracks are filled up."⁵⁸

The dominance of the C.P.R. in the region made transportation difficulties even worse at times. Viewing the Crow's Nest Pass as its

domain, in 1906 it moved to prevent the Canadian Northern Railway from buying Lille coal by refusing it the use of C.P.R. cars to ship the coal. The Canadian Northern then supplied its own cars, but the C.P.R. refused to handle them. Charles Casey, Canadian Northern superintendent from Kamsack to Edmonton, testified before the 1907 Alberta Coal Commission that the C.P.R. "wanted all the coal for their own use."⁵⁹ Eventually the Canadian Northern developed mines in the Coal Branch area to meet its needs, shutting the coal companies of the Alberta Pass region out of a potentially lucrative market.

Although many of these problems were apparent at the outset, the entrepreneurs who wanted to develop the coal deposits on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass did not believe they were insurmountable. All experienced businessmen knew that establishing a new industry required a great deal of time, effort, and money, and many of them were also well aware of the special difficulties presented by wilderness development. All over western Canada they saw new industries being created and commerce beginning to expand. Others, clearly, had overcome the problems of the wilderness: the mining developers were determined to do the same.

Chapter I

"PEOPLE ARE CLAMOURING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COAL MINES"¹

Many factors contributed to the rapid rise of the coal mining industry on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass, but the single most important factor was the state of the Canadian economy. By 1901 the world depression had passed and the prospects for industrial and commercial development across Canada looked very good indeed. A new optimism took hold of the nation, its politicians, and its businessmen. The future seemed limitless and even the wildest expectations for progress appeared reasonable to many. In this environment most investors and developers were willing to spend money freely, assuming that whatever the present cost might be, the returns would invariably be greater. The coal developers of the Crow's Nest Pass and their financial backers were by no means immune to this brash self-confidence. Many of them cherished dreams of capturing coal markets from the Pacific coast to central Canada and throughout the northwestern United States. They envisioned the emergence of a local iron and steel industry alongside the thriving smelting operations of the region, making the Pass the Pittsburgh of western Canada.

While the hopes and ambitions of the coal operators on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass were derived from the general optimism of the country, their positive outlook was also a product of the success they had enjoyed in earlier business endeavours. Most of these entrepreneurs brought with them a wealth of business experience acquired in the northwestern United States and in British Columbia, and a firm belief in the ability of the individual to improve his financial status through effort and risk.

The founders of the first mining company to begin operations in the Alberta Pass region were both Americans. Henry L. Frank, born in Ohio in 1851, eventually moved west looking for moneymaking opportunities. He

spent some time in the gold fields of Colorado and New Mexico and then settled into a prosperous saloon business in Butte, Montana. The profits he made through liquor sales enabled him to enter the construction industry as well as a host of other enterprises and to invest profitably in the mining and smelting industries. He also became involved in politics and, in 1901, narrowly missed being elected a Democratic senator for Montana.² With a successful and varied career in business and politics and some knowledge of the mining industry, he confidently invested in coal lands near Burmis offered to him by a prospector, C. A. Little, on a sublease.³

Frank's partner, Samuel W. Gebo, had also established a winning reputation in business before arriving in the Pass. He too was originally from the eastern United States but his experience was more directly related to mining than that of his partner. He had worked as a coal prospector for the Northern Pacific Railroad, had developed his own coal mine and town of Gebo in Montana, and owned coal rights in Luscar.⁴ Thus, by the time he arrived in the Crow's Nest Pass to develop the Burmis lands for Frank, he was not only wealthy, but also confident that he could establish another profitable coal mine.

Jules Justin Fleutot and Charles Remey, who opened the second mine on the eastern side of the Pass, were both Frenchmen based in Nelson, British Columbia. Their business backgrounds, however, did not differ substantially from those of Frank and Gebo. Both were experienced mineral prospectors who represented an exploration syndicate formed in France but incorporated in Britain in 1898 as the United Gold Fields of British Columbia. Some time after having established a claim near Kaslo, they travelled to the Crow's Nest area in search of better prospects. Rather than minerals, however, Fleutot and Remey discovered promising deposits of coal that they immediately decided to develop. Whether or not they were personally wealthy is not clear, but by 1903 their strong financial backing in France suggests that they were probably well connected and respected businessmen in their own right.⁵

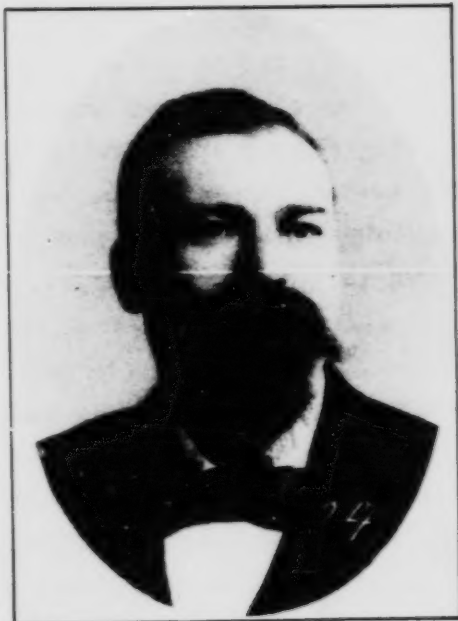


Figure 4:
H. L. Frank. No date
(Montana Historical Society)



Figure 5:
Jules J. Fleutot, 1892
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

The early accomplishments of John Breckenridge and Peter Lund were achieved in the logging and lumber businesses and in contracting. Breckenridge was a Scotsman born in Mauchland County, Ayrshire in 1863. His family immigrated to Canada and settled in Peterborough, Ontario, in 1869 but twelve years later, at the age of eighteen, John left home. He travelled throughout the United States working for railroad companies, then settled in British Columbia where he began to work his way up in the lumber business. Soon he was operating logging camps and doing rail construction for the C.P.R.⁶ As a result of these activities, Breckenridge forged a partnership with Peter Lund, another aspiring entrepreneur. Lund's family had emigrated to America from Sweden, finally establishing itself in Spokane after sojourns in Baltimore, Maryland, La Crosse, Wisconsin, Winnipeg, Maple Creek, and Fargo, North Dakota. In 1883, Peter worked on the construction gangs building the C.P.R. main line across the prairies. Quitting the crew somewhere near Golden, British Columbia, he worked in the logging industry between Windermere and Spokane. In 1897, Lund settled his family in Cranbrook. The decision to live there proved very timely. Within months the construction of the C.P.R.'s Crow's Nest Pass railway provided plentiful opportunities for local entrepreneurs.⁷

As partners, Breckenridge and Lund took full advantage of the local boom caused by the construction of the railway. Setting themselves up as contractors, they took on a number of projects. They built sections of the new Crow's Nest Pass line as well as branch lines for American railway tycoon J. J. Hill.⁸ In 1903, the C.P.R. hired them to improve the Crow's Nest Pass line near Frank. Scheduled to begin work in late April, Breckenridge and Lund packed sixty men and their equipment into nine rail cars to Frank. The crew arrived late, luckily missing the Turtle Mountain Slide by hours. The C.P.R., requiring a crew to reopen the line, expanded Breckenridge and Lund's contract to cover rebuilding the line through the Slide. With 1,100 men and two carloads of blasting powder, the line was reopened in twenty-three days.⁹

In addition to these and many other projects, the partners created the Crow's Nest Pass Lumber Company in 1902 and made it into one of the

largest lumber businesses in southern British Columbia. Capitalized at \$250,000 and producing 200,000 board feet per ten hour day, the company employed over 300 men at its peak.¹⁰ The success they enjoyed in these enterprises no doubt convinced them to expand their interests even further and, in 1903, Breckenridge applied to the federal government to purchase the coal rights for the west half of Section 35, Township 5, Range 2, West of the Fifth Meridian.¹¹

Charles P. Hill was another entrepreneur who, upon achieving some success in other business ventures, turned his attention to the emerging coal mining industry in the Pass. In 1892, Hill had staked mineral claims across the international border just south of Creston, British Columbia.¹² When a United States' customs office was established nearby, Hill, in partnership with a local resident, David McLaughlin, built the town of Porthill, presumably to support the new government office.¹³ He also served as a customs agent for the U.S. government and through that office he obtained information about the Canadian territories to the north.¹⁴ Based on these reports, Hill undertook several prospecting trips to Canada, one through the Crow's Nest Pass. Although documentation is incomplete, Hill may have been one of the first serious mining prospectors in the Pass.¹⁵ He was probably involved with Gebo and Frank in their first mining attempt near Burmis and his name has also been connected with early prospecting work in the Lundbreck area.¹⁶ By July, 1902, Hill had decided on the land he wanted to develop and had obtained control of the mineral and surface rights to it.¹⁷

The driving force behind the Galbraith Coal Company of Lundbreck, Andrew Laidlaw, was also an accomplished businessman before he entered the coal mining industry in the Pass. Born in Drumbo, Ontario, Laidlaw left Canada for greater opportunities in the United States. Prior to leaving, however, he had obtained part interest in the "leading" newspaper in Woodstock, Ontario. He owned outright the best newspaper in Galt where he had established the first newspaper in town. By 1898 he had settled in Spokane and had opened a brokerage business specializing in mining stocks in the Trail and Boundary district mines of British Columbia.

Laidlaw's own investments in Canada were so numerous that he created a company called the Imperial Investment Company to control and direct them. He was also the principal owner of the Clay Products Company of Spokane. As early as 1902 he invested in Crow's Nest Pass coal properties including those owned by the Galbraith Coal Company. His other Canadian investments included Coal Securities Ltd., the Alberta Coal and Coke Company (both in the Crow's Nest Pass), Jasper Park Collieries, Royal Collieries, Oyster Harbour Collieries, Durham Collieries, Colfax Coal and Coke Company, the People's Coal Company, and Princeton Collieries Limited.¹⁸

The founders of the International Coal and Coke Company also boasted an impressive list of business successes prior to initiating their mining venture at Coleman. The three Graves brothers, originally from Illinois, had settled in Spokane in the 1880s and had quickly established reputations as enterprising individuals. Frank H. Graves was a lawyer who practised in the city and soon became known as the "dean of Spokane lawyers." He was eventually joined by his brother, William G. Graves and another lawyer in the firm Graves, Kizer and Graves. Frank's interest went beyond law, though, and by 1889 he and a future United States senator, George Turner, had acquired a large block of shares in the Le Roi mine at Rossland, British Columbia.¹⁹

Frank Graves' participation in the mining industry was, however, overshadowed by the accomplishments of his other brother, Jay P. Graves. Leaving behind a hardware business in Plymouth, Illinois, Jay arrived in Spokane in 1887. There, he became involved in real estate with C. F. Clough, a future mayor of the city. When news of mining strikes in neighbouring Coeur d'Alene and British Columbia reached Spokane, he entered the mining business in the Boundary district of British Columbia. Ignoring expert mining opinion, Graves collected mining claims that showed low grade copper ores. With these claims he opened the Grand Forks and Phoenix mines, and developed an effective means of smelting the low grade ore. He then spent two years in Canada convincing Sir Charles Tupper to grant the C.P.R. a charter to build a rail line from Trail to the mines. He also had to find capital to finance his mining project and

travelled extensively in eastern Canada looking for investors. Success in these efforts enabled him to form the Granby Mining, Smelting and Power Company, named by one of the investors for his home town in Quebec. This company became the largest copper producer in the British Empire.²⁰

The mining and smelting of copper on such a large scale required a great deal of coal and coke. As the cost of importing coal from the east was prohibitive, Graves and the other businessmen involved in the company, now named Granby Consolidated, decided in 1903 to seek a less costly supply of coal. Because the Crow's Nest Pass coalfields were already known for high quality bituminous coal, the company purchased the Denison properties in Alberta. A. C. Flumerfelt, of Victoria, British Columbia, was chosen to be the first president of the newly formed International Coal and Coke Company. He, too, was an accomplished businessman. Not only had he been an executive of Granby Consolidated but he was also president of the Hastings Shingle Manufacturer's Company in British Columbia, a director of the Eastern Townships Bank, president of the British American Trust Company, and the organizer of Pacific Underwriters.²¹

The group of entrepreneurs who formed The Leitch Collieries Company Ltd. in 1907 differed from most of their fellow coal operators in that they possessed no American experience and connections. The Leitch brothers, Archibald, Angus, Malcolm, and Alexander, were originally from La Prairie, Quebec. The eldest brother, Archibald, had worked in the Ottawa River lumber camps as a young man, acquiring a knowledge of the business. He became an agent soliciting lumber contracts and followed the C.P.R. construction crews across the country supplying them with timber.

Eventually, he and his three brothers settled in Oak Lake, Manitoba and started a flour milling company in 1888. After remaining there for nearly ten years, Archibald decided to explore territory further west. Settling in Cranbrook, Archibald obtained some local timber rights and opened the Cranbrook Lumber Company. He operated two mills, one at

Cranbrook and the other at Jaffray. By 1898, the Cranbrook mill employed most of the local residents. In 1902, Archibald and his brother Malcolm, who still ran the family mill at Oak Lake, successfully merged the Cranbrook company with the McNab Lumber Company and the Park Mitchell Lumber Company to form the East Kootenay Lumber Company. This firm became one of the area's largest, surviving on orders from the C.P.R. and others. Archibald went on to become the first president of the Mountain Lumberman's Association.

Angus J. Leitch was apparently the first member of the Leitch family to become interested in coal mining in the Crow's Nest Pass. In the spring of 1901 he did some prospecting in the area. Not until 1907, however, did the family become directly involved in the development of a coal mine. In that year, William Lemond Hamilton, who probably met the Leitch brothers through business contacts in the Pass, asked the family to join him in his planned mining venture.

Hamilton, an Ontarian, had moved to the prairies some time around the turn of the century. After some experience as a farm labourer, he filed on a homestead but gave up that venture to become a mine labourer. The experience he gained in the mine eventually enabled him to progress to the position of mine promoter and owner. He developed his own coal mine at Taber, Alberta where he gained extensive knowledge of prospecting, mine operation and, most importantly, mine financing. A shrewd businessman, Hamilton always kept his eyes open for new and better investments. In 1906 two of his prospectors, John and William Kerr, examined the Crow's Nest Pass region. As a result of the Kerrs' report, Hamilton sold the mine at Taber and turned his attention to the Crow's Nest Pass. On 1 November 1906, he purchased the coal rights to some land in the Byron Creek area from John C. Drewry. These lands became the southern properties of the Leitch Collieries Ltd., formed in 1907.

The confidence, ambition, and determination of these and other entrepreneurs involved in the coal mining industry on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass is reflected in the rapid and extensive development of the area's coal reserves between 1901 and 1909. During that period no



Figure 6:

Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Hamilton at Passburg, Alberta, c.1900
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

fewer than fourteen mines began operation. Total coal production rose from 15,000 tons in 1901 (the amount produced by the lone mine at Frank) to 395,000 tons in 1909, to 645,000 tons in 1910.

Expansion on this scale required the expenditure of large amounts of investment capital. First, a mine company had to purchase the coal leases for the land it wanted. Then, depending on the location of the land and the proposed entryway, a railway spur line might have to be constructed to connect the mine to the main line of the C.P.R. At the same time, entryways had to be dug and preparations made to begin the first stages of underground operations. Once the work underground had advanced sufficiently, above ground facilities had to be constructed to process the coal and prepare it for market. At some mines, coke ovens and other specialized equipment had to be added to the regular cleaning and sorting systems.

Mining companies could acquire coal leases in a number of ways. They could be purchased directly from the federal government, the owner of all Crown lands. West Canadian Collieries purchased the leases for the mine at Lille from Ottawa, as did Breckenridge and Lund.²² The Spokane-based owners of the Davenport Coal Company also purchased the coal leases for their Burmis land from Ottawa and some of the leases controlled by Leitch Collieries were obtained in this fashion as well.

Other leases could be acquired from a third party who, for one reason or another, chose to sell rather than to develop the land. C. P. Hill obtained control of the mineral and surface rights for the land that was to become the mine and town of Hillcrest from George Mills and Mary Heap in 1902.²³ West Canadian Collieries acquired the Blairmore South leases from a third party. The coal leases at Lundbreck owned by R. James Galbraith were eventually sold to the Galbraith Coal Company which by then was controlled by Andrew Laidlaw.²⁴ As well, the Lundbreck leases belonging to the short-lived Alberta Coal and Coke Company were bought up by the International Coal and Coke Company. International also purchased the Denison properties that later became the centre of its Coleman operations.²⁵ William Hamilton, one of the founders of Leitch

Collieries, acquired the land and the leases for the southern properties from the first owner, John Climie Drewry.

Some coal companies or entrepreneurs did not buy coal leases outright but subleased the land. This method of land acquisition tended to be limited to smaller operations where large amounts of capital were unavailable for investment. Samuel Gebo was apparently one of the few established entrepreneurs who tried this method. He subleased the coal rights to the Burmis land he developed when he first arrived in the Pass. Later, the East Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company subleased the same land from the Spokane businessmen who owned the coal rights.²⁶

The cost of obtaining the rights to mine coal on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass depended, of course, on the agreement made with the government or the first holder of the lease. Buying the lease outright would probably have been more expensive than subleasing from a third party. The amount of land covered by the lease and the apparent quality of the coal also influenced the cost. Prices for coal leases, then, varied. One group of prospective developers paid one dollar an acre for the coal leases on land near Burmis,²⁷ while the Great Northern Railway was reported to have paid in excess of eight dollars an acre for the rights to mine coal on a large section of land in the Pass.²⁸ In 1902, C. P. Hill purchased the land and the mineral rights to his future mine site for about nineteen dollars per acre, an investment of \$12,200 for one section of land.²⁹ Gebo and Frank spent \$30,000 on their land, a substantial initial investment.³⁰

Other companies acquired large pieces of land that would have required similar expenditures. The Breckenridge and Lund Coal Company bought 1,400 acres of coal leases³¹ while the McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company purchased 1,950 acres.³² The International Coal and Coke Company acquired some 4,410 acres.³³ The two largest blocks of coal leases on the Alberta side of the Pass measured between 12,000 and 15,000 acres, and were owned by West Canadian Collieries and Leitch Collieries.

Purchasing land and coal rights constituted a substantial but only an initial investment for the coal companies. A great deal of money was still required to begin development of the deposits. Most entrepreneurs did not have sufficient capital of their own to undertake such a task, and were therefore forced to find outside investors and to sell shares in their fledgling companies. C. P. Hill, for example, located the land he wanted in 1902 but did not begin operations immediately. Instead, he spent two years soliciting investment through his Hill Promotion and Development Syndicate. In 1904 he had convinced a number of Ottawa area businessmen and politicians to contribute a total of \$29,000 towards the opening of his coal mine. To this he added \$4,000 of his own and by early 1905 he was able to form the Hillcrest Coal and Coke Company.³⁴

Other coal mining entrepreneurs and companies required outside capital to begin development as well. The Breckenridge and Lund Coal Company, the Davenport Coal Company, and the Maple Leaf Coal Company began operations with authorized capital of \$500,000 each based on stock or share issues.³⁵ The Galbraith Coal Company began with half that amount, issuing one million shares at a price of twenty-five cents each,³⁶ while the Alberta Coal and Coke Company set out with four times as much, or \$1,000,000 in authorized capital.³⁷ This figure was dwarfed by the \$3,000,000 available to the McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company through its shares.

Some entrepreneurs, like J. J. Fleutot and Charles Remey, were able to begin development of their coal lands with their own funds. They soon found, however, that the costs of the early stages of construction went beyond their private means. They, too, were forced to seek outside investment. Unlike most of their fellow mine operators, however, Fleutot and Remey gained access to a large and enduring source of capital in 1903 when they won the confidence of some investors in France. These investors provided Fleutot and Remey's new company West Canadian Collieries with an initial capitalization of \$400,000. This soon rose to \$720,000.³⁸

Once the mining companies had acquired land and accumulated some investment capital, they began work on mine operations. The first steps in this process generally involved clearing brush near the proposed entrance to the mine, and digging and timbering the main entryway to a point where a coal seam was struck. Development of transportation and haulage systems and above and below ground facilities then began in earnest. At the Frank mine of the Canadian-American Coal and Coke Company, for example, work proceeded quickly. Entries into the seam at the foot of Turtle Mountain were pushed forward at a rate of sixty feet per week and by October 1901, had reached 1,400 feet. One year later, in October 1902, the main tunnel was 4,500 feet long. Above ground progress matched the pace of work at the seam. The company constructed a short spur line and side tracks to connect the mine with the main C.P.R. line, and installed railway scales to weigh the box cars full of coal. As well, by the end of 1901, a temporary tippie had been erected for loading the cars and a fan installed to ventilate the mine. Production in 1901 reached 15,000 tons, extremely high for a year devoted to development. A year later, the mine produced a staggering 160,000 tons.³⁹

The need for a seven mile spur line to reach the main rail line complicated the development of Lille. The construction of the Frank and Grassy Mountain Railway, as the spur line was called, was a difficult and costly task. Elevation problems had to be overcome with switchbacks and numerous small trestles. Part of the line had to be rerouted after the Turtle Mountain Slide, but still reached completion by February 1903, only ten months after it had been started.⁴⁰ At the same time important underground work was proceeding. By the end of 1903, the underground work force was three times its original size and at least five openings had been driven into the seam. Of these, mines one, two and three proved to be the most important.⁴¹

Work in these three mines was, by the end of 1904, coordinated through the number one mine. All the coal was carried out to the tippie from its entry. Work on the tippie facilities at Lille had begun in the early months of 1903 and was completed by spring 1905. The tippie was capable of handling 1000 tons of coal per shift and its output could be increased

by the addition of an extra picking table. The spring of 1903 also saw the construction of an impressive line of Bernard coke ovens from bricks imported specially from Belgium.⁴² Total coal production at Lille was under 10,000 tons for 1903 but, by 1904, when construction of basic facilities was well advanced, it rose to nearly 60,000 tons. In 1906 and 1907 further alterations improved the surface installation. The company built a new stone powerhouse containing boilers and engines, and completed a washery for the slack coal.⁴³

The Hillcrest Coal and Coke Company's mine at Hillcrest also moved swiftly to develop its operations in spite of challenging circumstances. Initial entries at the mine exposed coal seams of high quality lying in a syncline dipping gently to the south. The upper seam, in places fourteen feet thick, was chosen for development.⁴⁴ C. P. Hill's first problem proved to be the location of the entries to this seam. They were some distance south and at a higher elevation than the main line of the C.P.R. Consequently, coal cars from the mine had to be hauled 3000 feet to the edge of a hill and the coal lowered by conveyor to a tippie at the bottom. The tippie was connected to the Crow's Nest Pass railway by a two mile stretch of standard gauge line built by Hill who liked to boast that his railroad was not quite as long as the C.P.R.'s but just as wide.⁴⁵ In other ways, the Hillcrest haulage system was similar to those established in most mines in the region. At first it relied heavily on horses for underground work. Spike teams gathered cars along the main entry tunnel and delivered them to the outside where a small steam locomotive pulled them to the top of the hill. Eventually compressed air locomotives replaced some of the horses. These facilities, constructed through 1906-1907, cost Hill over \$100,000 but they greatly increased production at his mine. In 1906, the Hillcrest mine produced just under 30,000 tons of coal. The following year it produced nearly 60,000 tons and by 1908, a recession year, it was producing nearly 130,000 tons.⁴⁶

At Lundbreck, the Breckenridge and Lund mine produced coal as early as 1903 but substantial development of mining operations did not begin until the end of 1905. Major installations on the surface were completed by



Figure 7:

Tunnel No. 1 mine in Hillcrest, Alberta. No date.

(Crowsnest Pass Historical Society)

1906. To service the nearly vertical shaft used to enter the mine, a steel pithead frame held a direct acting hoist that raised and lowered a cage. A powerhouse to house boilers and engines and a coal screening plant soon appeared. The completed plant was capable of producing 1,000 tons of coal daily by February, 1906.⁴⁷ With these improvements, the Breckenridge and Lund Coal Company increased its production from 3800 tons in 1905 to 19,600 tons in 1906. During the same year the average number of men employed above and below ground rose from seven to ninety-one. Further development of the mining facilities occurred in 1910 and 1911. Another tippie with a stationary screen capable of sorting coal into the lump, nut, pea and slack sizes was erected in 1910. As well, a fifteen ton storage bin was added to the facilities. A new 120 H.P. hoisting engine for a slope, new revolving screen, and a new picking table were installed in 1911. Working through the strike of that year, the Breckenridge and Lund Coal Company reached its highest production level, 44,000 tons.⁴⁸

Just north and west of Lundbreck and the Breckenridge and Lund mine, the Galbraith Coal Company developed its mine site. Work began in 1904 and, by the end of that year, seams were under full development and a tippie capable of handling 1,000 tons of coal daily had been erected. A 1,500 foot inclined track connected the mine with the tippie. A 40 H.P. hoist hauled the cars up the track. Gas powered the rest of the surface equipment. Galbraith further expanded the facilities in 1909 and 1910. The tippie was extended and a revolving coal screen installed in 1909. During the next year the Company built a new boiler house and installed a 50 H.P. locomotive-type boiler.⁴⁹

Work at the Maple Leaf Coal Company mine east of Bellevue did not begin until 1907 but, as with other Pass mines, progress at the site was rapid. Construction of a tippie was completed by the spring of 1908. It included an expensive tramway 1,400 feet long that connected the mine with the top of the tippie. A gasoline engine hauled the coal cars along the tramway. Between 1909 and 1911, additional expenditures totalling nearly \$30,000 upgraded the surface facilities.⁵⁰ A boiler, a steam engine, and a generator were installed to supply the various power needs

of the equipment. As well, the new facilities included a fan and an air compressor. The latter powered airpicks along a 500 foot line in the mine. New rail scales capable of weighing up to 150 tons also improved the surface plant. In 1912, Maple Leaf ordered a second boiler, installed a 75 H.P. hoist, and made additions to the boilerhouse, powerhouse, and lamphouse.⁵¹ These improvements helped to increase coal production at the mine from 15,000 tons in 1908 to around 50,000 tons in each of 1909, 1910 and 1912.

In 1909, the Davenport Coal Company undertook development of a mine site near Burmis. The company gained access to a series of coal seams by digging crossmeasure or rock tunnels, and then developed the seams by gangways or main entries. The most productive of these seams were numbers two and five.⁵² A combination of haulage systems brought the coal to the surface. Horses were used in the initial stages of development and for short distances. As development progressed, hoists were installed to handle larger loads over longer distances.

Above ground, extensive development also took place. When operations commenced in 1909 a spur line was graded and laid with tracks to link the mine site with the C.P.R. line. The Company built a temporary wood frame tippie over the spur line to the west of the C.P.R. station. By the beginning of 1911 two small boilers, an air compressor and a Fairbanks railway scale were also in place.⁵³ In 1912, Davenport made several additions to the facility. New boilers, a steam engine and an electrical generator expanded the capacity of the power plant. Improvements to the tippie equipment included the installation of a more efficient coal sorting screen. Called the Marcus screen, it moved coal along its length with pulsating forward and backward motions unlike earlier screens that relied on gravity to carry the coal across their surface. The Marcus screen treated the coal more gently than gravity screens, producing more of the valuable lump pieces. A rotary dump that deposited the coal more gently onto the screen was also installed.⁵⁴ These improvements undoubtedly contributed to the steady rise in the production levels of the Davenport mine after 1909. In 1910 production was only 9,851 tons but by 1911 it had reached 21,819 tons. By 1912 production hit 38,412

tons and the following year a new record was set as 74,344 tons of coal were produced.

The McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company also began operations at its mine site near Coleman in 1909 with facilities expanding rapidly after a modest beginning. In the first year the equipment and techniques utilized were rustic at best. In mid-1910, one entry, ten by twelve feet, had been driven 1,270 feet into the number two seam. Daily output was 150 tons. Still without a fan system, ventilation in the mine was by "natural means,"⁵⁵ assisted by a hoisting engine and the exhaust steam from the pump. A steam hoist hauled the coal up the slope to the surface where horse teams took over, pulling the coal-laden cars to the railway siding. Here the coal was transferred to boxcars. When the tippie was still under construction, the extracted coal was usually not washed. Within a few months after opening, however, an electric locomotive replaced the horse teams. It transported the coal two miles to the newly completed tippie to be cleaned. Steel cars capable of holding four tons were also introduced into the mine, and a fan installed to upgrade the ventilation system.⁵⁶ Horse teams still hauled coal in the mine along the entries to the bottom of the slope. These ongoing improvements were reflected in the McGillivray Creek mine's production figures. In 1909 the mine produced just over 30,000 tons of coal. This rose to over 50,000 tons in 1910.

Leitch Collieries initiated development of its coal lands in 1907 with an opening on the southeast side of Byron Creek about 1100 feet south of where the creek joined the Crowsnest River. Leitch drove a tunnel 3000 feet into the number two seam that averaged over six feet in width. A wooden tippie and a spur line connecting it to the main C.P.R. line soon appeared. When the results of this first mine proved marginal, the focus of operation shifted to a new mine site. The number two mine began operations in 1909 in the area north of the Crowsnest River known as Police Flats. At this location at least five good seams existed and development moved quickly. From 1909 until the end of 1910 some 2200 feet of gangway were opened on number two seam. Miners entered the one, three, and four seams through rock crosscut tunnels running east. During

1910 a rock tunnel was also driven to the surface in number two entry, forming the air shaft for a dual purpose intake and exhaust fan. In 1911 and 1912, the main entry on number two seam lengthened a further 1400 feet while developmental work on seams three and four continued.

The haulage system progressed from a series of hoists and horses to a gas locomotive by 1912 and the surface plant evolved just as quickly. By the end of 1910 a tipple system capable of handling 2000 tons of coal per day had been completed. Equipment at the site included a Roberts and Schaefer tipple with coal storage area, shaking screens, and picking tables. Since the company wanted to profit from the coke market, it built a washery and Mitchell coke ovens. Two power plants housing generators and boilers supplied power for surface and underground operations.

The Blairmore South mine opened by West Canadian Collieries in 1909 progressed equally swiftly. The first opening was made just south of the town boundary and tunnellers drove a 330 foot tunnel through gravel and rock before striking the number two seam. Within three years, the main gangway in this seam had advanced nearly 5,500 feet. The second entry, started shortly after the first, reached 2,200 feet in the same period. Above ground, West Canadian completed a 3000 foot spur line in 1909 and by 1910 the temporary equipment used to load railway cars had been replaced with a permanent structure. The tipple system, framed in wooden timbers rather than steel, contained a creeper chain haulage track that carried the mine cars to a Phillips crossover dump. A picking table and bar screens of various sizes were connected to the dump. This machinery could process 800 tons of coal in an eight hour period. By 1911 a powerhouse to power the mine machinery as well as a new boiler house had been completed. The Company upgraded its rail facilities by installing a railway scale and by constructing sidings large enough to hold thirty-five railway cars. Production levels rose from 30,000 tons in 1909 to 110,000 tons in 1910, indicating the value of these improvements.⁵⁷



Figure 8:
Construction of coke ovens at Leitch Collieries,
Passburg, 1910
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

Coal production throughout the Pass region rose dramatically after 1908, reaching over 640,000 tons per year by 1910. Most mine operators saw this as proof that their huge investments had been justified. They believed that the mines and their markets would continue to expand and develop. This initial success convinced them that they would not only recover their investments, but realize a substantial profit as well.

Chapter II

"MENACING PECULIARITIES"¹

Despite the remarkably swift rise of the coal mining companies on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass and the great optimism and determination of their owners, it was by no means a simple task to operate a profitable coal mine in this region. The geology of the area, with its "menacing peculiarities" caused a series of problems for the companies. The coal seams lay at steeply pitched angles, which necessitated use of the room and pillar method of extraction. The seams did not generally follow continuous paths, contained lethal pockets of methane gas and, because they were of soft bituminous coal, broke down readily into dust during the mining process. These circumstances greatly increased the risk of accidents and disasters. The worst coal mining disaster in Canada occurred in the Pass at the Hillcrest mine on June 19, 1914. The massive explosion that took 189 lives was apparently caused when sparks from falling rocks ignited the coal dust in the air. Similar though less destructive explosions took place at West Canadian Collieries' Bellevue mine twice in 1910 and again at Hillcrest in 1926. The prevalence of methane gas in the mines of the Crow's Nest Pass was also a constant source of concern since it, too, was combustible. Ventilation systems, then, had to be installed and carefully maintained to prevent the build-up of gas throughout the mines.

After choosing a suitable entry point, a main entry and a counter entry were dug parallel to one another. The main entry was the largest and most heavily timbered tunnel in the mine. Along it, mine development expanded and daily operations moved. The haulage roads and airway paths were routed along both the main and counter entries. The counter entry also served as the staging area for the rooms, the coal producing tunnels dug by the miners. Unlike the main and counter entries which were usually on a level plane or slightly pitched in favour of the loaded coal cars, the miners' rooms were driven up the pitch at an angle of several

degrees. The rooms were separated by pillars, or blocks, of coal about fifty feet wide. Every sixty feet crosscuts were made where coal was mined out forming tunnels between the rooms. The pitch of each room depended on the nature of the seam. To help overcome the often extreme tilt of the seams, rooms did not always break off from the counter entry at right angles. Once the main entry began twisting and turning to follow the seam, the pattern of a mine quickly became confusing.

The mining room itself measured approximately ten to fifteen feet wide and under ten feet high. The miner divided his room roughly in half. On one side a chute carried the mined coal to the entry tunnel below. The chute was generally lined with sheet metal to allow the coal to fall more freely. Sliding doors at the bottom of the chute, similar to those on grain trucks, could be raised to take coal from the chute. A wall separated the chute from the other side of the room. The lower portion of the wall was made of planks while the upper section was made of brattice cloth, a non-porous material used to direct air up one side of the room, across the coal face, and down the other side. Proper control of the air flow dispersed the gases that seeped from the coal face. Opposite the chute, against the room wall, there might also be planks or smaller boards, depending on the firmness of the wall. This side boarding, called lagging, might also be installed on the roof.

The manway or ladder that enabled the miner to enter the room was located on the other side of the brattice away from the coal chute. Climbing it could be a difficult task in a steeply pitching seam. Once in the room, the miner began work at the coal face. Extraction required undercutting the face or cutting a vertical slot down the face centre. These cuts, made by the miner with his pick axe, had to be made before explosives could be used to bring down the remaining coal. Blasting coal from the solid, that is, making no cut into which the coal could expand during the blast, was quicker but it was also very dangerous as the charge might explode back into the room. Once the miner had drilled holes for explosives, filled the holes, and ignited the charge, he shovelled the loosened coal into the chute. In most mines, miners were paid according to the tons of coal produced. They also received separate payments for



Figure 9:
Map of Hillcrest Mine
(Provincial Archives of Alberta)

timbering their rooms, for laying brattice cloth, and for constructing chutes and manway ladders. Extraordinary conditions such as hard seams and wet work areas earned the miner extra pay.

Mining by the room and pillar method was a costly, inefficient practice. Large amounts of coal had to be left unmined as the pillars of coal supporting the roof of each room could not be removed. The rooms, crosscuts and entry tunnels had to be timbered for support, requiring not only lots of timber but the employment of special crews of timbermen. While the miners looked after timbering in their rooms, the timbermen maintained and repaired the supports in the main entry and counter entry tunnels. The timbermen supplied the miners with timber for their rooms, and often repaired the ventilation system and laid track in the mine. Timbermen received a fixed daily wage for their work.

Moreover, as underground development progressed and the pattern of the mine workings became more complex, an increasingly lengthy and elaborate haulage system had to be built and maintained to keep the coal moving to the surface facilities. Another crew operated this system. The crew members drove the horses or compressed air locomotives that carried the coal from the mine and brought timbers, equipment, and men into the mine. These workers also received a daily wage.

Perhaps the most important factor driving up the cost of mining coal by the room and pillar technique was the labour-intensive character of the work at the coal face. Because of the steep pitch of the rooms, labour-saving machinery, such as coal cutting devices, could not be used as it was too heavy to be held against the face at an angle. The miner performed all the work at the face with hand tools - pick axe, auger, and explosives - by the light of a lamp. This dependence on manual labour meant the ongoing expenditure of a fairly constant amount of money to pay all the workers. Day-to-day costs for operations and maintenance therefore, were high.

The productivity of labour could be quite variable, however, depending on the ability and experience of the workers and on their attitude

towards their work. It was not always easy to find experienced men and, even when they could be found, they often did not speak English. It was sometimes argued that this could inhibit their ability to function well underground, especially in a crisis.² Yet even though the presence of various nationalities in the mines made the transmission of orders or the reporting of dangerous conditions difficult, the mines would not have been able to operate if the managers had hired only those workers fluent in English.³ In 1907 at Frank only one third of the 150 miners there were English-speaking. The rest spoke either French, German, Belgian, Finnish, or an eastern European language. One worker at West Canadian Collieries' mine at Lille estimated that only half the work force could read English. To deal with this problem a foreman was chosen who could translate important information.⁴ Some mines apparently preferred non-English workers. According to one source, West Canadian Collieries laid off all English-speaking miners at Bellevue in June 1905 and hired foreigners in their place. The reasons for this preference may have had less to do with ability and experience than with the lower price they commanded.⁵

Even the presence of experienced miners did not guarantee smooth and productive underground operations. The observations of Frank B. Smith, mines inspector from 1899 to 1906, suggested that experienced men were especially prone to accidents. Naturally, they were often given the most difficult jobs at a mine but experience often bred over-confidence which certainly contributed to more than a few accidents. In one case, a pit boss, the man responsible for overseeing all practical operations, "was opening a box of caps and held his lamp over the box. His hands were blown off and injury sustained to one eye."⁶ Still, managers generally preferred experience to inexperience, for which the only solution was careful screening before hiring followed by a lengthy training period. George Fraser, the mine manager at International Coal and Coke in Coleman was particularly thorough. Men seeking work as miners were questioned carefully and then put to work at less dangerous jobs such as timbering until Fraser was "satisfied" that they were "competent to do the work" required of them. Fraser usually ignored certificates proving a miner's

competence from other provinces, states, or countries, claiming he had seen "some pretty poor specimens of miners holding certificates."⁷

The ability of the miners directly affected their productivity and, in those mines where miners were paid by hourly wage rather than by the ton, it could drive up the cost of labour. Moreover in all the mines of the Alberta Pass region, geological conditions made work underground difficult and dangerous and miners demanded to be paid in accordance with the unusual risks they took and the extra effort they expended in getting coal from the twisted, gaseous seams. At Frank, for example, the steep pitch of the passageway to the rooms exposed miners to falling coal and rock. Falling coal remained a problem once they had reached their rooms. Between 1901 and 1917 at least seven miners died as a result of coal falls at Frank. In December, 1902, Robert Belshaw, a former mine foreman with forty years of mining experience, was killed by a coal fall. Frank Carr died in a similar accident in the same year. Three men, John Kawlanski, William Nemersky and W. Carmichael, were killed by falling coal in 1905 and two more men, John Psetak and Archibald McDonald, died in 1909 and 1917 respectively.⁸ Many other miners were injured by coal falls over the years at Frank and at the other mines in the Pass.

Coal and rock falls were not the only hazards that the miners faced daily. They could be asphyxiated by the gas seeping from the coal seams, or their lamp flames could ignite the gas causing an explosion. In 1902, William Clark and John Haines both died from gas asphyxiation at Frank, and James Turnball was burnt in a gas explosion triggered by his lamp flame.⁹ As well, shot firing or any other work with explosives in the mines was dangerous. Sam McLean, a Frank miner, died in a shot firing accident in 1904.¹⁰ Frank miners also had to make an unusually risky return trek to the surface. Due to the steep pitch of the passageway they had to swing out on ropes which, as a result of constant wear and tear, could break at any moment.¹¹

Other mishaps commonly occurred along the haulage system. In a horse-powered system, drivers needed to be skilled in handling their

animals. If a horse did not stop on command, workers could be crushed between coal cars. In a hoist and cable system, the rope rider who attached the mine cars to the moving cable performed his task in near darkness. Not always able to signal the hoist operator as he rode the mine cars down, the rope rider frequently jumped from the moving cars. A wrong guess at his location could result in serious injury. With compressed air locomotives, which moved quite quickly, there was an increased risk of derailments underground.¹²

Coal chutes also presented certain dangers for the miners and the "buckers" who cleared them. To ensure that the coal slid smoothly from the rooms down the chutes to the entry tunnels, the chutes were inclined at least thirty degrees and lined with sheet metal. Coal falling down these chutes frequently jammed. A dam of coal weighing several tons could be held back by the smallest of coal lumps. A bucker or a miner would have to unplug the chute to keep the coal moving. When jabbing from the side failed to loosen the pile, men climbed into the chutes, braced themselves against the side wall or rib and kicked at the coal. Usually, the jam cleared without incident, but from time to time, the man working on the jam lost his balance and fell down the chute along with the coal to his death. M. Geudnor, a Frank miner with two years of experience, died as a result of a fall down a chute in May, 1904.¹³ At least six other Frank miners had died in similar accidents by 1918.¹⁴

The mine inspectors attempted to monitor conditions in the mines and to minimize the risks and dangers as much as possible but it was a very difficult task. The Mines Branch was understaffed, making complete, thorough, and regular inspections of the many mines in the region virtually impossible. It took six days to do a proper inspection of West Canadian Collieries' Greenhill mine at Blairmore. From January to June of 1910 no monthly inspection took place at Frank and inspectors had to rely on recordings of gas levels that were often outdated and inaccurate, leaving them without convincing evidence upon which to base their reports.

The work of these inspectors was complicated further by the peculiarities of the coal seams and land formations in the Crow's Nest Pass. One

inspector, F. B. Smith, reported to the deputy of his department that at Frank "the conditions of stratification" changed so frequently "that the mode of working had to be changed accordingly." He stated that when the "mine was first opened the coal seam was pitching to the west at an angle of 70° from that it changed to vertical, again 60° to the east and as low as 30° east. . . ." and he concluded that the "working of coal in this mine will always be dangerous." Consistency in the application of regulations was, no doubt, hard to maintain in such variable conditions.¹⁵

Nor was consistency the only problem that arose in the application of mining regulations. The objectivity of the inspectors was also a constant concern to the Mines Branch, the mine operators, and the miners. In 1907, the provincial mines inspector wrote to the Minister of Public Works, W. H. Cushing, on the subject of impartiality:

At a time like this when there is so much ill feeling between the operator and the operatives in the coal camps, it behooves the Public Works Department to strictly enforce the coal mines regulations impartially so that neither the men nor the masters can have any grounds for making any statement as to the government upholding one side against the other.¹⁶

When violations occurred, the department generally took a moderate course. According to one official, the department was "anxious to obtain conviction" but did not "wish to press for heavy penalties" since its primary intention was "to show that the coal mines act must be lived up to" and to encourage operators to make an honest effort to do so.¹⁷

Even though the mine inspectors attempted to remain neutral, the decisions and recommendations they made were often unpopular. In 1907, Norman Fraser, the provincial mine inspector, reported on the mining methods being used by Samuel Gebo at Frank and suggested that the work being undertaken there might be dangerous:

During Mr. Gebo's previous regime at Frank it was . . . rumoured, and probably with a good deal of truth, that his main object was to boost the output up so he could dispose of stock in the mine. To do this he was compelled to draw a number of pillars and curtail his development work. Some of these pillars ought not to have been drawn until a much

later period, as they were situated in such a position that when they were taken out the pressure was thrown on to some of the main roads and their main roads have been giving them trouble ever since.¹⁸

The company responded to these comments in a letter sent directly to Alberta premier A. L. Sifton. It claimed that Gebo's techniques were "carried on currently in France, in the mining district of Nord and Pas-de-Calais, and also in Belgium," and that the use of these techniques was supported by "the testimonials of Directors and Engineers of the biggest mines in France and Belgium." In conclusion, the company argued that it should "be allowed to carry on by the same system of operations at the Frank Mine." Gebo himself had always maintained that he never lost sight of his miners' safety and that he and the company had gone to great expense to protect them.¹⁹

The decision of the Mines Branch to order the use of locked safety lamps instead of open flame lamps also caused discontent. Mine managers like Samuel Moore argued that use of safety lamps "would increase the danger to life and limb of employees without adding in the least to their protection." According to Moore, "the dim and uncertain light of a safety lamp," would make the already treacherous journey through the mine to the coal face even more dangerous. The miners, too, felt that use of the safety lamp would make their job more difficult.²⁰ The open flame provided a miner with much better light making his journey to and from the coal face a little easier and also aiding his work at the face. Although an open lamp made a gas or dust explosion more likely, many miners clearly believed the chance of an explosion was less than the chance of an accident occurring while travelling in the poorly lit and treacherous tunnels. In spite of the disastrous Hillcrest explosion that claimed 189 lives and was thought to have been caused when a spark ignited coal dust, the miners went on strike demanding authorization for the use of open flame lamps. One Frank miner, James Turnball, was burned in a gas explosion triggered by his open flame. Laid up for four months due to his injuries and living on only a small amount of compensation paid by the union, Turnball, when asked if miners preferred open lights, replied "everytime". When safety lamps were introduced, the miners at



Figure 10:

At the coal face

(Public Archives of Canada)

one mine went on strike demanding a return to open flame lamps, while at another they called for a 10 per cent raise in their rates.²¹

Despite the best efforts of mine inspectors to reduce the physical risks involved in coal mining in the Crow's Nest Pass, the mines of this region remained very dangerous. The miners recognized and, in general, accepted the dangers of their trade, but they demanded to be paid in accordance with those dangers. To help achieve their demands they organized themselves into unions. The mining companies, on the other hand, resisted the demands of the miners in an attempt to keep the cost of labour, perhaps their largest expense, as low as possible. They, too, eventually organized, forming the Western Coal Operators Association. Frequent conflicts between labour and management resulted. The miners' demands generally fell into two categories: more money and better working conditions. They attempted to increase their earnings by several means. They negotiated and sometimes struck for high tonnage and wage rates for work at the face. In 1907, this was the central issue in a two week strike that affected several mines in the region. It came up constantly in other disputes prior to World War I as well. Sometimes the miners succeeded in obtaining rate increases, and sometimes they did not.

Even with regular increases in the rate paid for a ton of coal, miners' earnings fluctuated dramatically. The following table²² indicates the lowest and highest monthly pay cheques received by twelve miners who testified at the Alberta Coal Commission hearings of 1907:

Louis Mark	\$50 \$80	Hopkin Evans	\$30 \$70
August Kovach	\$65 \$105	William Graham	\$50 \$125
Reese Evans	\$13 \$140	Clement Stubbs	\$8 \$127
Aaron Moseley	\$43 \$132	Samuel Hall	\$45 \$100
Alexander McLeod	\$57 \$195	Edward Holmes	\$50 \$140
Alexander McCulloch	\$22 \$65	Robert McKay	\$45 \$100

Many factors contributed to these fluctuations. Operations could be slowed or halted by labour disputes, car shortages, market declines, or any one of a host of operational problems. As well, a change in the seam which could drastically reduce the quantity of coal mined. As a result of these uncertainties, miners won a contract clause guaranteeing a minimum payment for a day's work. The miners were determined, however,

to see tonnage rates and wages maintained and increased from time to time to offset inflation. In July 1912, miners at the International Coal and Coke Company mine at Coleman struck when the company refused to make up pay for contract miners to the guaranteed minimum of \$3.00 per day.²³

When miners worked in unusually poor or difficult conditions, they asked for special pay to offset the additional problems they faced. One condition that frequently arose was water in the work place. Determining how much water constituted difficult circumstances and therefore warranted extra pay was always difficult and controversial. One early definition proposed by the Western Coal Operators Association in 1908 suggested that a wet place should be defined as one where

water dripping from the roof is sufficient to wet a man's clothing, or where standing water is sufficient to wet a man's clothing above the knees. . . .

When gum boots could "keep a man's feet dry," the space was not to be considered wet.²⁴ In 1917 a more specific definition became common: if the water in the area wet a man's clothing or exceeded 6 inches in depth, he received an extra \$.50 per day.

Miners could always increase their earnings by increasing their coal output. In order to accomplish this, they tried to reduce the amount of time and effort spent doing jobs auxiliary to their mining. The miners negotiated with the coal company to have the timbermen bring props to the crosscut closest to the miner's room. The miners could therefore reduce the time spent working at this less profitable task as it paid only \$.05 a foot. Thus, in 1906, when West Canadian Collieries refused to assume the task of taking timbers for the contract miners into the mine at Lille, the miners threatened to halt work claiming they could not undertake these duties and still make money.²⁵ Disagreements over this issue persisted. In 1913, the entire underground work force at International's Coleman mine walked out over a shortage of lumber, and in the same year at Bellevue a one-day strike was called over the timber issue.²⁶

Occasionally, the miners were required to do "company" work, such as repairing a length of the main entry that had been squeezed by the roof settling, or other similar maintenance work. For these jobs, miners received a fixed daily rate that was lower than what they could earn mining coal. The miners did not like doing company work, and confrontations over this issue led to work stoppages at a number of mines. The contract miners at Hillcrest in August 1908, after a period of employment on company work at \$3.50 to \$4.50 per day, demanded that the owner put them back on contract work. They felt that they could make \$8.00 a day mining coal.²⁷

The use of explosives in the mines also proved to be a contentious issue. Miners wanted to free as much coal as possible and, therefore, demanded fairly large quantities of explosives. The operators resisted because too much blasting produced a greater amount of less valuable slack coal. Disputes over the quantity of explosives allowed per miner frequently resulted in conflicts between the miners and management. In 1916, Blairmore miners struck when the mining company, West Canadian Collieries, began issuing only two sticks of dynamite daily to contract miners instead of the three they had previously been allotted.²⁸ The miners demanded an increase in the minimum guaranteed rate to \$4.00 daily or a return to the three stick allotment. The importance of dynamite to the miner's ability to make a decent living was also demonstrated following the Hillcrest mine explosion of 1914. When the mine reopened, the company prohibited shot firing until a full investigation of the cause of the explosion was completed. The new miners hired on, however, went on strike for two weeks demanding that shot firing be allowed.²⁹

Miners also fought with the companies over the methods of using explosives. Many miners preferred to blast coal from "the solid." Instead of first picking a trench in the coal face which gave the exploding coal a space into which it could expand, miners simply drilled holes, loaded in dynamite, and exploded the charge. While blasting from the solid was quicker because a trench was not cut, it was also more dangerous. Without a trench to allow for the force of the explosion, it often shot back into the room, injuring the miner. The miners, anxious

to produce more coal and perhaps believing themselves immune to the added dangers of blasting from the solid, preferred this method. The owners, who did not want a large percentage of slack, prohibited "the speedy method of using dynamite at the mine face." The miners, who claimed that they would not earn enough money otherwise, stayed away from work. At Lille in 1911, Bellevue in 1912 and Greenhill in 1916, miners called short strikes to protest the ban on blasting from the solid. In the end, the miners lost out as safety considerations convinced the government to outlaw the practice throughout Alberta.³⁰

Although miners generally accepted the harshness of their working conditions, they attempted to force the operators to make improvements wherever feasible. Circumstances differed from mine to mine meaning some grievances were specific to just one mine. Other issues concerned miners throughout the Pass. Where miners were paid by the hour and not for the amount of coal mined, disputes arose over the method of calculating the number of hours spent underground. The miners favoured the eight hour bank to bank law. Under this law, the eight hours included the time spent travelling to and from the coal face. Arguing that part of their "hardest work" was "between the face and the entries,"³¹ they claimed that the journey to their rooms should be counted as part of their eight hour shift. The argument was a persuasive one, especially for a mine like that at Frank where miners maintained that it could take anywhere from forty minutes to two hours to reach their places of work.

The provision of wash houses became another major issue. Many owners were reluctant to provide these buildings, complaining about their cost. Most companies put off building these structures until prospects for future development looked secure.³² Even then there were doubts about who should be responsible for their construction. In 1907 O. E. S. Whiteside, manager for West Canadian Collieries, testified before the Alberta Coal Commission that no wash house existed at Lille because "the men had never signified a willingness to pay for it."³³ Whiteside went on to argue that the hotels owned by the company in Lille and Bellevue had wash rooms that the miners could use and which, he maintained, were adequate for the present.³⁴ Agitation by the miners continued,

however, and by 1910 wash houses had been built by the company at Blairmore South, Bellevue and Lille.³⁵

Once built, the wash houses continued to create conflicts between the companies and the miners. At Lille, miners complained about the "filthy and unfit" condition of their wash house which they claimed was so poorly heated there was ice on the floor. These problems were solved in 1911 with the construction of a larger steam heated wash house.³⁶ The wash house at the Canadian-American Coal and Coke Company's mine in Frank was described by "A Miner," in a letter written to the editor of a local newspaper, as a "saturated, filthy, unsanitary and poverty stricken" [sic] hole.³⁷ Upon investigation, the editor found the problem had arisen during a layoff at the mine in February. The wash house was not being used and the pipes that heated it were allowed to freeze and break. When the miners returned after the layoff they found the building heated by a single stove.³⁸

Conflict over the provision of wash house facilities also arose at the Hillcrest Coal and Coke Company mine. Rudimentary facilities had been provided even before legislation required their construction. Once regulations came into effect, however, the Hillcrest wash house was found to be below the minimal standards outlined by law. Located in a room over the boilers, the boiler pipes passed through holes in the floor. Each pipe had a ten inch space around it. Since there were no safety valves on the boilers, waste steam flowed upward and entered the changing room above. When the boiler tubes were cleaned of dirt and soot, the same thing happened. The men also placed their wet clothes on the boiler pipes to dry. Although only forty of 200 employees used these facilities, the majority undoubtedly agreed with a miner who claimed that "the dirty filthy hole we have here . . . no decent man would keep hogs in."³⁹

Efforts to force the mine owner, C. P. Hill, to improve these conditions stretched over sixteen months from May 1908 to September 1909. Throughout this period, Hill balked at orders from the provincial mines inspectors to provide new facilities. To support his arguments, Hill

first claimed that his company could not afford to build a new facility. Later he argued that he was awaiting the necessary supplies to build the wash house. Hill also maintained that his men did not desire a new changing place. The miners had met concerning this matter at the Imperial Hotel in Frank and had decided that they would not pay a \$1.00 per month rental fee for lockers in the new wash house, although such arrangements were common at other Pass mines. Nevertheless, the mines inspector compelled Hill to provide new facilities and, in the meantime, to clean the present room. According to the deputy minister, if the task were left to the men it would "never be done."⁴⁰

Some mining companies avoided these long and difficult confrontations by providing good facilities from the outset. As early as 1907, the International Coal and Coke Company based in Coleman, had built a "commodious" structure. The building was 31' x 82', and included an office, a surgery, twenty shower baths, and 252 lockers for clothes. It had hot and cold running water and steam heat. The miners welcomed the construction of this facility, and as a result, "perfect harmony" existed "between the men and management on this issue."⁴¹

When confronted with the demands of their workers, the mine operators responded in a variety of ways. Anxious to make their mines profitable, the owners attempted to keep labour costs down while producing a large quantity of high quality coal. In order to protect their collective interests, some of the coal company owners formed the Western Coal Operators' Association in 1906. Through this Association they attempted to counteract union demands for higher wages and tonnage rates. Negotiating during the 1907 strike, the Association was successful in retaining an open shop hiring policy but was forced to concede wage increases to the miners. The operators were less successful in 1909 when they had to yield to both demands for a closed shop and a wage increase.⁴² Frustrated by the power of the union, some owners attempted to circumvent the unions and the contracts. In October 1907, C. P. Hill, owner of Hillcrest Collieries, argued that the rate paid contract miners should be cut from \$.55 per ton to \$.45 per ton. When the miners refused to accept the reduction, he closed the mine. His

actions, however, contravened the labour laws of the time and he was prosecuted under the Industrial Disputes Investigations Act.⁴³

Undeterred by one failure, Hill continued his efforts to reduce the cost of underground labour during 1908. He rid the mine of those men he considered "agitators," and continued to call for tonnage rate reductions. He wanted a \$.35 per ton rate and no extra payments for timbering work, arguing that markets were so severely depressed that he had to sell coal for \$.20 per ton less than he had in 1907. By January 1909, Hill had become so concerned about his shrinking profit margin that he took his contract miners off the pillar work they had begun only a month earlier. The cost of their labour, he maintained, had become too great. He had been paying them \$.50 per ton, a generous rate which allowed some men to make \$8.00 to \$10.00 a day, and \$.05 a foot to cut and place any necessary timber. Hill's mine manager, Cory Weatherby, was especially angered by the timber rate because he claimed the miners were taking advantage of this price and using too much timber. Testifying before the union, Hill argued for a reduction of these rates as a prerequisite to proceeding with the pillar work. He claimed that his mines deserved a special exemption from the rates set in the last contract with the miners' union. To support his position, Hill cited his extra production costs: a muddy main entry that required constant maintenance, a costly haulage system between mine and tippie, a retarding conveyor that lowered the coal down the hill to the tippie, and a two mile spur line to the C.P.R. built and maintained at his own expense. These operational requirements added \$.20 to his production costs for each ton of coal. Moreover, Hill claimed, miners' rates were already so high that the miners refused to work the standard hours. If they worked more regularly, he went on, they could produce four times as much coal.⁴⁴

Many owners and managers complained about the hours miners worked when the issue of the eight hour bank to bank law was discussed. They wanted the eight hour shift to include only the time spent working at the face, and not the time spent travelling to the face. They used various arguments to support this stand. O. E. Whiteside, manager of West



Figure 11:
Hillcrest surface plant
(Crowsnest Pass Historical Society)

Canadian Collieries, suggested that the contract miners themselves did not want hours recorded at the face because they never spent eight hours there. Most of them, he claimed, earned enough money in well under eight hours.⁴⁵ A. Wilson of Breckenridge and Lund claimed, perhaps more convincingly, that miners paid by wage would be earning money while waiting for the cage to transport them down the vertical shaft at Lundbreck and into the mine. Moreover, the men were "always a little slow getting on and off cage" and "some think they should finish the story or conversation started before they get off the cage."⁴⁶

The mine operators also fought the high cost of underground work by controlling the quality of coal produced by the miners. In order to encourage production of large pieces or lump coal, management restricted the use of explosives at the face by charging the miner for the powder he used. Some companies, like the Canadian-American Coal and Coke Company at Frank, were even accused of supplying their miners with unsafe powder cans to discourage blasting.⁴⁷ The mine manager, Samuel Moore, responded that the cans were safe enough if carried properly but that the men did not always "take the time to be bothered locking and unlocking their cans" and that the company could hardly be blamed for their lack of caution.

The mine companies also controlled the use of explosives in the mine by banning the blasting of coal from the solid. At some mines this policy was reinforced by a pay system in which the coal mined by each miner was not measured until it passed over the sorting screens. The fine or slack coal, having fallen through the screens, was not included in the weight credited to the miner. This system encouraged the production of large pieces of coal demanded by the domestic market for use in coal stoves. At those mines where slack coal was turned into coke, the company could make a very profitable product for virtually nothing. Even when the slack was averaged into the price paid to the miner for lump coal, the cost to the company was minimal. At those mines where this system of screening the coal prior to weighing was not implemented, careful attention was paid to the quality of the coal produced by the miners. Because each car load of coal coming out of the mine generally contained

some dirt or rock, most companies counted 2000 pounds, or one ton, of coal for every 2240 pounds that came from the miner's room. Miners generally accepted this figure. If an unusually large proportion of rock appeared it could mean that the seam was pinching out, but most often it meant that the miner was taking too much off the roof or floor that adjoined the seam. If this was the case, the miner received a smaller tonnage credit and his pay was reduced accordingly.

The cost of labour and the frequent conflicts with the unions were not the only problems confronting the mine operators. Above ground operations also demanded the constant attention of management. Because the intense competition for markets constantly forced mine owners to produce more and better coal, the surface facilities played an absolutely crucial role in making a mine profitable. At the surface, coal had to be cleaned, sorted, and loaded into railway cars in preparation for transportation to its markets. This was done in the tipple. When the coal reached the tipple, "tippers" dumped it into a long chute leading to the sorting machinery. Tipple machinery varied from mine to mine. In general, the coal travelled from the chute on a conveyor to a picking table where workers removed the pieces of rock and dirt manually. Then, propelled either by gravity or by a shaking motion, the coal travelled over a series of perforated screens. The perforations increased in size along the screen. This effectively sorted the coal by size as it fell through the appropriate holes. Most screens divided the coal into slack, nut and lump sizes, although some included an additional pea-sized category. If the slack was being turned into coke, it continued on to the coke ovens. The rest of the coal either fell directly into waiting cars, or onto a wharf to be shovelled into the cars. After being weighed, the cars left the colliery.

At the International Coal and Coke Company, the cleaning and sorting process differed slightly. In this screen system, coal travelled over a series of stationary screens angled at 30 degrees, and then along picking tables before reaching the coke ovens or the railway cars. Coal first passed over bar screens with openings of four inches. Coal that passed over these screens went on to picking tables where rock, or ash as it was

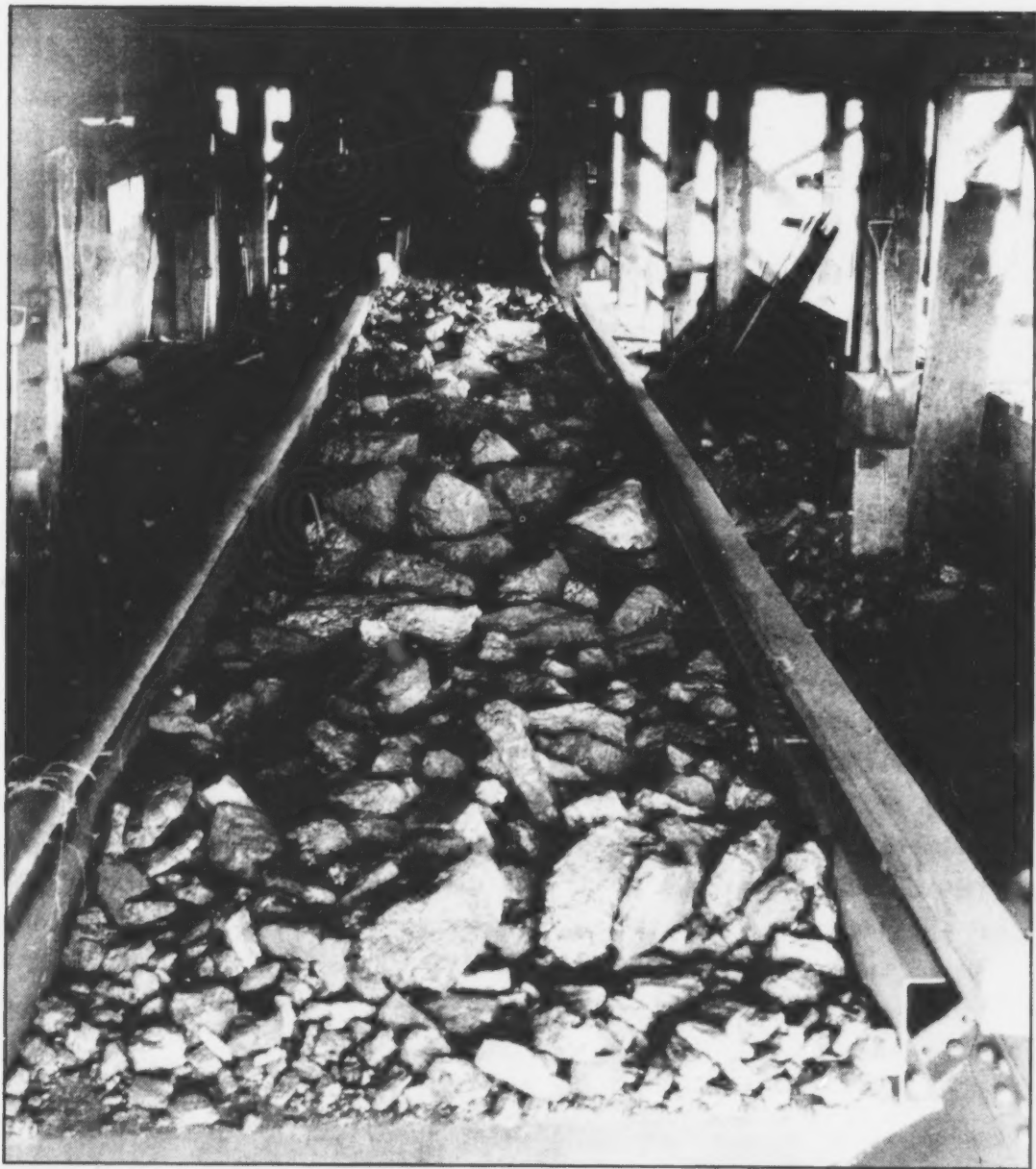


Figure 12:
Interior of a tippie with Marcus screen
and picking table
(Public Archives of Canada)

sometimes known, was removed and discarded. The coal was then loaded into railway cars.

The coal that had fallen through the four inch screen continued over screens with two inch openings. The coal which did not pass through the two inch screen was then sent to a picking table, the rock discarded, and the coal sent to the coal cars. For the coal which passed through the two inch screen, there were two options. It was either sent to another set of picking tables or to a coal breaker that would crush the coal into finer sizes for use in the coke ovens. The coal crusher also cleaned the coal as it was crushed, so if the coal was reasonably clean it bypassed the picking table and went directly to the crusher. This undersized two inch coal could also be mixed with the four inch oversized coal instead of going into the coke ovens.⁴⁸

Slack coal went through a washing process in preparation for coking. The ash content of this fine coal had to be carefully monitored since too much ash in the final product could reduce its value to smelting companies. According to one mine manager, a 5 per cent variation of ash in the coal being coked could mean a difference of \$1.00 a ton on the selling price of finished coke.⁴⁹ Both Leitch Collieries and West Canadian Collieries' mine at Lille built wet washeries to reduce the ash content.⁵⁰ This washing process separated the various materials in the coal by flotation. The lighter, clean coal floated in water while the impurities sank. The International Coal and Coke Company did not have a wet washery until the 1920s, depending instead upon a dry cleaning system of picking tables and a coal breaker that also did some cleaning.

After cleaning, special coal cars called lorries transported the slack to the coke ovens. The ovens heated the slack in an oxygen-reduced environment until all elements other than pure carbon vapourized. This residue, called coke, fuelled smelters in British Columbia and the northwestern U.S.. Mines in the Pass used three different styles of coke ovens. International had 216 traditional Beehive ovens built at their Coleman mine, while West Canadian Collieries constructed fifty Bernard ovens at Lille. Leitch Collieries used 101 Mitchell ovens at their Police Flats site.⁵¹

During the early stages of development, the tipping, cleaning, and sorting of the coal took place at temporary wooden tipples. At a few mines, the coal was loaded directly into rail cars from the mine without being cleaned or sorted.⁵² As the mines developed, however, it became necessary to upgrade the above ground facilities because the speed at which coal could be processed and loaded into the waiting railway cars determined the producing capacity of the mine. Consequently, mining companies spent a great deal of money purchasing the latest and most efficient equipment that invariably led to large increases in production.

At the same time, however, elaborate above ground machinery presented certain maintenance problems. In most cases, the machinery had to be purchased from manufacturing companies located in centres distant from the Crow's Nest Pass. Consequently, almost all the mines had to deal with the financial difficulties of purchasing and transporting processing equipment. West Canadian Collieries brought coke ovens from Belgium, while Leitch Collieries ordered the one million bricks required to construct their coke ovens from companies based in St. Louis, Missouri, and Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Other equipment for the Leitch ovens was purchased in Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Chicago, Illinois. In 1912, the Hillcrest Coal and Coke Company ordered a railway car loader from Iowa and new screening equipment from Tiffin, Ohio. The Breckenridge and Lund Coal Company purchased its first tipple from the Jeffrey Manufacturing Company of Columbus, Ohio. The McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company also chose a tipple manufactured by an Ohio company for its Coleman mine. The Davenport Coal Company of Burmis went even farther afield for some of its equipment, ordering a Marcus sorting screen manufactured in Stockton on Tees, Great Britain. Smaller equipment, such as electric motors, air compressors, boilers, steam engines, and hoists were all obtained in the United States. Moreover, it was common practice to hire skilled American engineers to accompany the shipment and supervise its installation.⁵³

Once the equipment had been installed, however, the great distance separating it from its manufacturer meant the mine companies had to do their own repair and maintenance work. This required a wide variety of

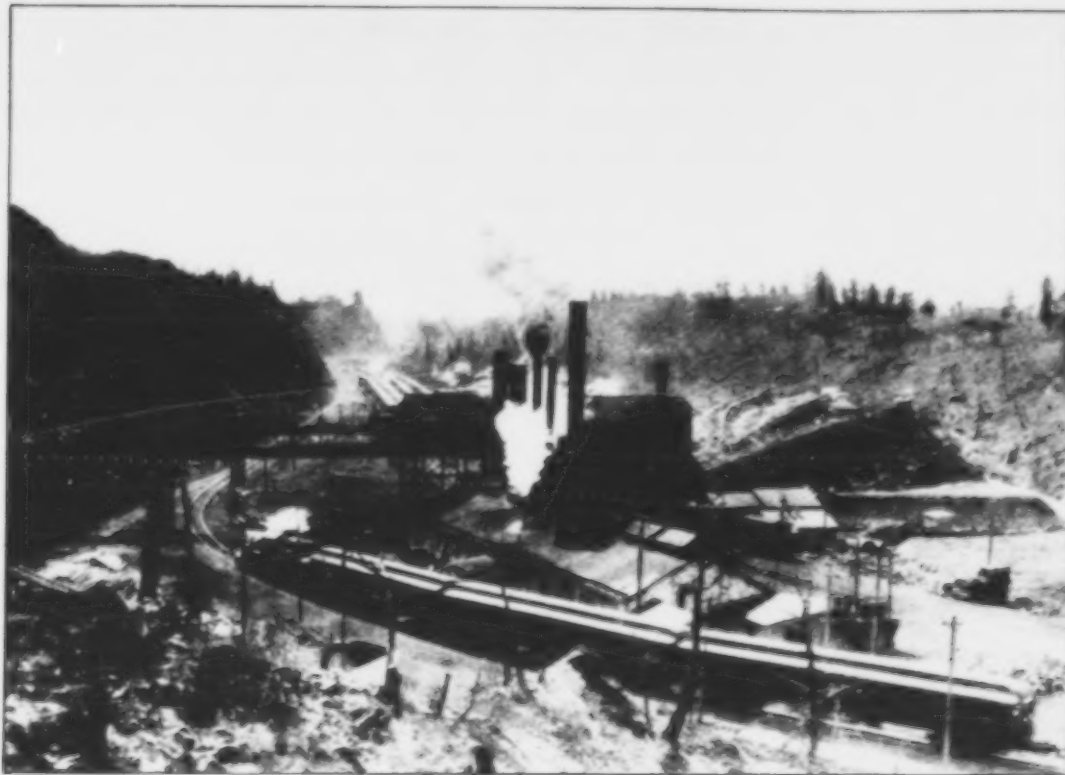


Figure 13:
General view of Bellevue Collieries, 1929
(Public Archives of Canada)

equipment and a skilled team of repairmen. Blacksmith and machine shops had to be constructed and tools such as drill presses and metal lathes installed. Moreover, since crucial parts for repair were difficult to obtain quickly, repairmen had to experiment and improvise in order to prevent a costly shut down.⁵⁴

Providing the power to run all the equipment used in a mine was another important aspect of surface operations. This power ran not only the tipple machinery, but the ventilation fans and haulage systems that supported underground operations as well. The vital importance of the power supply is demonstrated by the construction of stone and, later, cement cast buildings to house the equipment. In these powerhouses, coal and coke fired the boilers, producing steam. The steam was fed into steam engines which provided a source of mechanical power. This power drove equipment like ventilation fans, machine shop drill presses and lathes, and air compressors for the compressed air locomotives on underground haulage systems. Steam engines also turned generators to produce electricity to power other equipment on the surface. Like tipple equipment, the machinery in the power plants was costly, difficult to obtain, and a constant challenge to maintain and repair.

Transportation difficulties also plagued the mines. For those mines where the tipple was located some distance from the mine opening, there was the additional expense of building and maintaining a railway track. The owners of Leitch Collieries had to build 2200 feet of track to connect the opening of their mine with the tipple. In addition, it had to be enclosed to prevent heavy snow falls and strong winds from inhibiting the movement of the cars.⁵⁵ Other companies that did not build tipple facilities close to their mine openings included Hillcrest Coal and Coke Company, Maple Leaf Coal Company, McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke, and West Canadian Collieries at Lille. All were forced to make special arrangements to transport coal to the processing plants.

Transporting the processed coal from the tipple to the main C.P.R. line created another problem for certain mining companies. At Lille, Beaver Mines, and Hillcrest, branch lines had to be constructed and maintained.



Figure 14:
Tippie at Mohawk Colliery
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

This added substantially to the cost of above ground operations and increased the risk of disruptions in production. On the Frank and Grassy Mountain Railway, the twenty-five creek crossings required trestle and bridge construction that created continual maintenance problems. As well, in 1910, a forest fire destroyed or damaged much of this trestle work.⁵⁶ In the winter of 1911, when snow forced the closure of the Lille mine, the miners were employed clearing snow from the tracks. At least a week was lost dealing with the snow problems.⁵⁷ The spur line from the Hillcrest mine to the C.P.R. was much shorter but it, too, presented certain problems. In 1905, the train jumped off a trestle killing the engineer and, five years later, a severe wind storm blew several cars off the track and destroyed the shed which housed the line's locomotive.⁵⁸

Perhaps the most serious transportation problem for the coal mines, however, was the chronic shortage of railway cars needed to transport the cleaned and sorted coal to its markets. Without an adequate and steady car supply, mine owners were frequently forced to suspend operations.⁵⁹ In 1910, it was estimated that 300 cars were needed each day to move the coal produced by the mines on both sides of the Crow's Nest Pass. This would have required a minimum of fifteen trains a day just to move coal.⁶⁰ The railways frequently could not meet this demand. Bad weather, track repairs, accidents, the prairie grain harvest, and labour shortages or disputes often prevented an adequate supply of cars from reaching the mines. In defence of the C.P.R., the General Superintendent of the C.P.R.'s Western Region, Reuben R. Jamieson, maintained that the C.P.R. had the second best car per mileage rate in North America.⁶¹

Yet, despite the claims of the C.P.R., car shortages remained a chronic problem for the coal companies. In 1907, the difficulties were particularly severe. The C.P.R. usually hauled coal in sufficient quantities to last the customer until the end of November. Then in the fall, the railway handled the prairie grain harvest, completing that task at the end of November in time to begin hauling coal again. In 1906, a miners' strike prevented the summer coal stockpiling by the railway and,

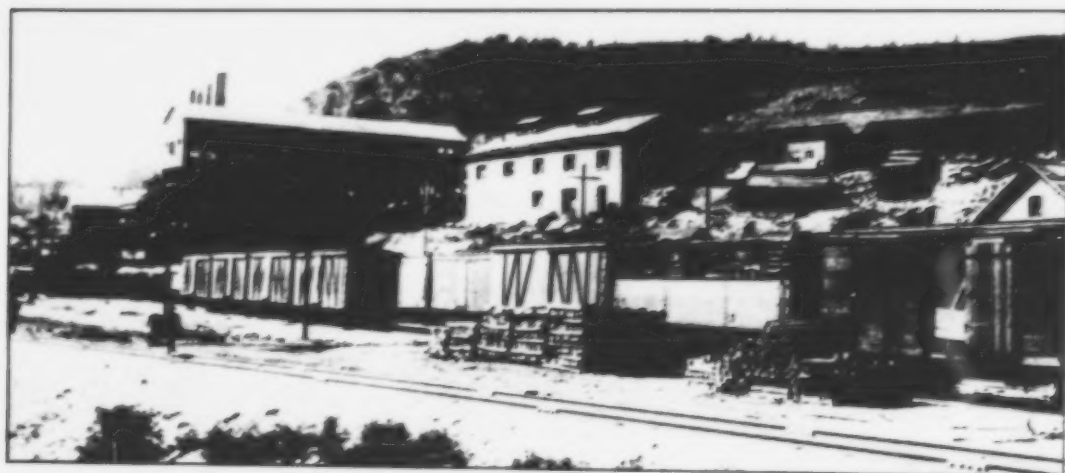


Figure 15:
McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke tipple
(Provincial Archives of Alberta)

by the fall when the mines were again producing, the cars were occupied with a particularly large fall crop and cattle shipment. Another complication arose when, in June 1907, a train wreck just west of Lundbreck spilled thirteen car loads of lumber across the tracks.⁶²

The effect these car shortages had on the mines soon became obvious. Testifying before the Alberta Coal Commission of 1907, the manager of the International Coal and Coke Company claimed that his company had lost fifty-five and three-quarter days the previous year due to the railway car shortage, resulting in an average wage loss to each miner of \$250.00 in earnings or approximately one-quarter to one-sixth of an average yearly wage.⁶³ In July 1907, West Canadian Collieries reported that the Lille mine was working only half time as a result of the car shortage. The problem continued to plague mines throughout the period before World War I. In September 1913, West Canadian Collieries' mines at Bellevue and Blairmore South were forced to close for two days because the prairie harvest had disrupted the flow of cars.⁶⁴ In an attempt to minimize the losses caused by shortages, some operators took advantage of the rare luxury of surplus cars by constructing extra rail sidings to store waiting cars.⁶⁵ These opportunities arose infrequently, however, and mines more often than not struggled to obtain a fair share of available cars.

Day to day problems such as these made operating a profitable coal mine in the Alberta Pass region a difficult task. Keeping labour costs down and production moving smoothly required constant attention and a substantial investment of time, effort, and money. While markets for coal remained good the investment seemed worthwhile and most companies struggled through the mine disasters, strikes, and frequent operational disruptions. Unfortunately, the demand for coal that had inspired the formation of these mining companies proved to be very unstable. The effects of this instability reached far beyond the mining companies. Any financial difficulties experienced by the mines had immediate repercussions for the businesses in the Pass communities.

Chapter III

"PARIS AND NEW YORK HATS . . . DRESSES AND SILK WAISTS"¹

The towns in the Crow's Nest Pass owed their existence to the coal industry. Although ranching, lumbering and smaller industries also operated in or near the Pass, coal remained supreme. When depressed markets or operational problems forced the closure of a coal mine, the community it sustained was suddenly lifeless. Almost as the last train cleared the station, track crews had started to rip rails from their beds. Lille, Beaver Mines, Lundbreck, Passburg, Burmis in Alberta, and Morrissey, Hosmer, and Corbin in British Columbia all vanished within weeks. Most of the displaced residents fled the Pass or sought work in other coal towns. Not far behind them were the sawmill owners, the lumbermen, the merchants, the clerks, the real estate promoters and all the other people who depended on the mine for their livelihood. The experience was familiar to all who watched the houses of a neighbouring town being slowly dragged down the street to a new mine site.

As a result of this dependency on the coal industry, everyone in the Crow's Nest Pass coal towns was interested in news concerning the mines. Had the main seam pinched dangerously thin today? Was a new seam to be opened? How much ash and carbon was in this new seam, and would it coke? Did the mine need more timbers? Would there be more jobs at the sawmill? A new fault hit in No. 1. Upthrust or downthrust? Would the old seam be found? No work until the rock tunnellers strike coal again? Would the seam still be as easy to mine? Would the latest gas explosion close the mine? What would the families of the dead men do? Could the company negotiate another contract with the C.P.R. and would it be as large as contracts with other mines? Would the train crews like the coal? How much coal would the smelters take? Did the train crews leave enough empty coal cars on the siding this week? Would there be jobs for the next month at least -- more jobs, and more customers at the butcher shop, the general store, and in the bar and the brothels? And if anyone

forgot these questions, the daily screeching of mine whistles jarred their memory.

Merchants, businessmen, and professionals established themselves wherever the coal mines opened to provide services for the miners. Commercial life in the coal towns was at best unpredictable, and at worst very precarious due to the constant fluctuations in the fortunes of the coal industry. Even on a day-to-day basis, the coal industry was difficult to serve. Mine officials sought cooperation from businessmen in maintaining control over the behavior of their workers while the workers themselves attempted to shape the system of commerce, which their wages supported, to suit their needs and desires.

The influence of the coal companies in Pass communities was felt in a variety of forms and to different degrees from town to town. In British Columbia where the largest coal companies operated, businessmen and townspeople alike tended to have less independence from the company than their counterparts across the provincial boundary. William Blakemore, the first general manager of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, the largest coal company in the Pass, recommended in 1898 just as development began, "a long lease in place of an absolute sale of the lots . . . enabling . . . [the company] to retain some control over the place [Morrissey, Fernie, Coal Creek, Michel]"². Although the company's Board of Directors used the lease only in certain cases, the objective of community control was definitely present.

In Michel, hotels could only be leased from the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company. They were to be run in an orderly manner or face closure by the company with only twenty-four hours' notice.³ The company undoubtedly inserted this clause with strikes in mind when emotions, already high, might easily have been intensified by the influence of alcohol. Control through leases also allowed for the black listing of miners considered too radical in their union activities. W. Chapman, a local union organizer, was refused service in a Michel restaurant and accommodation at a Michel boarding house in order to prevent him staying in the area.

Lessees knew their livelihood depended on the blessing of the coal company.⁴

The extent of company control on the British Columbia side of the Pass, especially in the early years of development, was also reflected in the company stores established by the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company. Generally an indication of company dominance over its work force in the British Columbia coal towns of Morrissey, Fernie, Coal Creek and Michel, these stores eventually brought the company more problems than benefits. In Morrissey competition caused the company great embarrassment. Joe Gall, a "Slav" miner, opened a general store after receiving a layoff notice. Setting up across the creek from Morrissey on undeveloped government land, Gall strung a bridge to the far bank for the convenience of his Morrissey customers. The coal company responded quickly by chopping the bridge moorings on their side of the creek. Not to be outdone, Gall felled several trees from his side across the tumbling stream to reopen the commercial arteries to his store. Equally clever, the coal company began to build a six-foot fence along its side of the bank to prevent pedestrians from reaching the Gall store. The sight of Gall's shotgun brought work on the fence to a halt. Both sides ended up in court, but the company was fined more heavily than Gall.⁵

Criticized for this and other incidents connected with their stores, the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company sold them to a partnership of two local businessmen, Bliss Trites and Roland W. Woods.⁶ It was thought⁷

advisable to dispose of the Company's stores, the possession of which . . . has been made a matter of continuous unfavourable comment, although quite unfairly. The stores do come in competition with the trading public, and this source of irritation will by sale be removed.

The sale, however, did not put an end to the pressure exerted by the store on its customers. To ensure prompt payment of bills, the Trites-Woods company paid an accounting clerk in the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company's office an extra \$15.00 per month to deduct monies owed to the Trites-Woods store from the miners' pay cheques. The practice ended after a warning from the local police, who recognized an illegal

garnishee of the miners' pay. The involvement of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company in the retail business did not end with the sale of its stores, however, in 1914 the company erected a store in Michel for \$30,740.47 which they rented to an unnamed merchant.⁸

The dominance of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company in British Columbia was also apparent in its relations with local newspapers. As early as December 1901, the coal company invested money in the Nelson Daily News, and that investment continued for a number of years, reaching a total of \$15,383.⁹ In Morrissey, the local newspaper publisher signed a contract with the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company promising to produce a paper favourable in its attitude to the company. In return for these services, the newspaper received a monthly allowance and the promise of a choice lot on Morrissey's main street in two years.¹⁰ A similar deal for lots, plus free light and power, was arranged with the first owner of the Fernie Free Press.¹¹

On the Alberta side of the Pass, examples of company influence were fewer and generally less obvious. It is true, however, that at Hillcrest, one store operator was the father-in-law of the mine owner, C. P. Hill, while two other local businessmen, Mr. Burnett and Mr. Cruikshank, worked out of a building leased from Hill.¹² West Canadian Collieries built and owned the hotel in Lille and the proprietor, Cloris C. Fauvre, maintained a close relationship with the company. One of its founders, J. J. Fleutot, had initially invited him to take on the job.¹³ In Frank, the secretary-treasurer of the local mining company, Canadian-American Coal and Coke, doubled as the editor of the Frank paper.¹⁴

Aware of the uncertainties inherent in any commercial undertaking in towns dependent upon the fortunes of one industry and, often, one company, many businessmen still believed that the potential rewards justified the risk of loss. Although records revealing profits are scarce, surviving evidence does indicate that substantial markets did exist for a variety of goods and services. For example, the two leading wholesalers sold nearly 40,000 cases (forty-eight 20-ounce tins) of canned goods annually on both sides of the Pass, while other wholesalers

in the district brought in an additional 10,000 cases. Based on pre-World War I population figures for the Pass and the surrounding area, this amounted to a consumption rate of two cases per person per year.¹⁵ In 1909 and 1910 the Western Canada Wholesale Company in operation throughout the Pass reported sales figures of \$391,000 and \$480,000 respectively, further indicating the potential for commercial success there.¹⁶

For some, the liquor trade also proved to be a very lucrative business in the Crow's Nest Pass region. The Pollock Wine Company based in Fernie and Blairmore had warehouses that could store eleven railcar loads of alcohol. Their wine list included six different champagnes priced from \$18.00 to \$34.00, several Bordeaux, Burgundy, German and Italian wines, and four types of sherry.¹⁷ The Frank Wine and Spirit Company, a branch of the Fort Steele Brewery, found it necessary to build a warehouse capable of holding two railcar loads of liquor, and in Blairmore, M. Rosse and W. A. Beebe built a 25' x 100' warehouse to house their company's supply of spirits.¹⁸

There was money to be made on a wide range of other items as well. Everything from staples to luxury items like the latest "Paris and New York hats . . . dresses and silk waists" available at Mrs. McMeekin's Frank millinery parlour, or the costly cigars sold at the Sanitorium Hotel, was available in the Pass.¹⁹

The commercial potential of operating in the Crow's Nest Pass always had to be weighed against the complications and disadvantages that plagued businesses in most single industry towns. All commerce necessarily revolved around the work and payment schedule of the local mine. Even in prosperous times, this caused certain problems. Before 1913 miners were paid on a monthly basis which forced them to buy goods on credit.²⁰ The shopkeepers, consequently, had to carry excessively high accounts over a long period of time and often found themselves looking at a stack of unpaid bills left by miners who had moved to other mining towns. Since the miners and their families could not buy goods without a credit system, a solution to this problem that still included the extension of

credit had to be found. In July, 1912, merchants considered forming a "merchant's protective union" to compile a "blacklist of Bad Boys".²¹ "Bad Boys" ran up accounts, then skipped town soon after payday without settling their debts. The publication of a black book with the names of these "dead-beaters" remained a goal of many businessmen.²²

Another means of trying to ensure the payment of bills was to offer cheque cashing services to customers. Hotels offered this service,²³ and many general stores also participated. Often, however, this practice caused the store owner more problems. At Passburg, when there was still no bank in the town, the store owner cashed the cheques of miners employed at the nearby Leitch Collieries Ltd. Offering this service to the mine workers also provided an opportunity to collect unpaid bills, and the system apparently worked harmoniously. When the international union organizer learned of this situation, though, he accused the store and local company of operating a company store. William (Billy) Hamilton, mine manager and part owner of Leitch Collieries Ltd., with a genuine reputation for honesty, argued that the charge was false. In a letter to J. T. Stirling, Alberta Mines Inspector, Hamilton recounted that:²⁴

when we started business here there was no bank in Passburg and the storekeeper offered to cash our statements and as men were quitting from time to time through the month and as his [the store owner] doing this relieved us from the necessity of keeping any cash in the office we adopted it temporarily and as it seemed agreeable to the men we continued this system even after the Union Bank was opened in Passburg and we never received a complaint from our employees about it yet.

But Thomas, Harris, International Board member came along last month and you would think from his statements that we were robbing our employees; in order to make a test of the matter . . . every employee was told that he could either take his statement to the store . . . or . . . get a cheque . . . only four men of all our employees took cheques to the Bank . . . so I can not see that there is very much dissatisfaction with our system of paying wages.

In response to the failure to find a workable and agreeable credit system, a movement developed that called for the payment of all bills by

cash. In Frank, this was enforced by a merchants' association that fined violating members \$200.00 for any transgressions.²⁵ Merchants argued that they would be able to offer lower prices if not compelled to carry accounts, and miners felt they would be less tied to one store and thus more able to take advantage of bargains by shopping at a variety of stores. Merchants, however, apparently found that the cash system decreased the volume of their sales and, consequently, the miners complained prices were never lowered. The cash system, therefore, did not appear to be a solution to the problems merchants had collecting their bills, and the obstacles miners perceived to fair treatment.²⁶

In addition, the cash system spawned another practice: the issue of tokens or trading stamps to encourage regular patronage at a store. Problems developed with this system when slot machines were made for receiving the tokens. In 1916, the Boston Cafe in Bellevue, owned by Mr. Mai Kai, was taken to court for this practice. With "Boston Cafe, Bellevue" stamped on one side, five of Mr. Kai's tokens could be purchased with two pieces of chewing gum for 25¢. Not only could they be applied to the purchase of cigars or other confectionery, the tokens could be placed in a slot machine returning more tokens, candy or sometimes, nothing. Although trading stamps or tokens were considered legal in exchange for goods, they could not be used for gambling in slot machines. The presiding judge warned Mr. Kai.²⁷

As a form of compromise between the monthly credit and cash systems of bill payment, neither of which seemed acceptable, a change from monthly to fortnightly pay cheques for the mine workers was proposed. Storekeepers argued that a month was too long to carry large debts and that many mine workers, faced with the prospect of paying a large bill at the end of the month, skipped town and looked for work at another mine down the road. With a pay cheque coming every two weeks, the store owners felt men would be more likely to find their bills less onerous and easier to pay.²⁸

Miners also believed that a fortnightly cheque would prevent the accumulation of large debts at the stores. In Lille before the cash



Figure 16:
Interior at Thompson's store, Blairmore c.1912
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

system began, a miner could obtain six months' credit. This could result in a sizeable bill.²⁹ Without such an extended period of credit, it would also be easier for the miner to budget his expenses.³⁰ As one miner, Aaron Moseley, argued³¹

the oftener I get my pay the better I can do. With cash handy a man can send away for things and take advantage of bargains, so perhaps he can save a little in that way.

To Edward Holmes, another miner, the issue was even more fundamental than budgeting and saving. He maintained that:³²

when a man has worked two weeks the company has had his money long enough. In a monthly pay they hold about six week's money in hand. . . . They always keep two weeks in hand back time. There is a big interest on that in the course of a year.

Coal companies, however, came out strongly against the system of biweekly pays. Owners and managers argued that this system required the extra expense of additional clerical staff to prepare the pay cheques.³³ As calculating a miner's pay involved many factors, such as the tonnage mined and the addition of extra pay for timbering rooms, constructing chutes, hanging brattice cloth, and bonuses for difficult or wet conditions, there was some validity to their arguments. Moreover, at some mines like Lille, the company was required to submit the miners' statements for perusal three days before cheques were issued.³⁴ For other mine crews, such as lumbermen or haulage workers who were paid a fixed daily rate, there was less work required of the company's accountants.

The coal companies also maintained an increase in drinking would follow the introduction of the biweekly pay schedule. According to George Fraser, superintendent of the International Coal and Coke Company at Coleman, "it [fortnightly pay] would mean two drunks in the month for some of them. . . . They look forward to that day and there is the devil to pay the next day around the mine getting out coal."³⁵ Similarly, Homer N. Gaylor, vice president of the same company, contended that "it is a fact that everything is upset and demoralized after each pay day. Some days thirty and forty men short."³⁶ Undoubtedly, these habits of excessive celebration had been encouraged by the lengthy periods between

pay, and the companies assumed the pattern would continue. One miner, however, expected a moderation of the habits, explaining that if³⁷

. . . a man drew fifty dollars at the end of a month he is liable [sic] to line up to a bar and drink the whole of that amount and it would do him more harm than if it were more evenly distributed. If he drew \$25 at the end of every two weeks he would not be liable [sic] to do himself as much injury.

Supported by the merchants and the miners, but opposed by the coal companies, the biweekly pay system did not become law until 1913.³⁸ Once imposed, it provided a partial solution to business problems, but only during regular mining operations. Slowdowns at the mines due to accidents, strikes, downturns in the demand for coal, or practical problems like shortages of railway cars, were another matter. Strikes in particular made all the day-to-day business concerns more acute and also created some entirely new ones. During the six month strike of 1911, merchants still carrying bills from the 1909 strike withdrew credit.³⁹ In response, Frank miners rented a vacant store, loaded in three carloads of provisions, and sold them to members at cost price. The United Mine Workers of America, the miners' union, also distributed more than \$1000 worth of supplies throughout the Pass. As a result of the miners' cooperative efforts, Bellevue merchants reported that business was extremely poor, with many firms "barely making expenses".⁴⁰ All merchants reduced their stock and laid off staff. At the hotels, managers dismissed their bartenders and began serving liquor themselves.⁴¹

One benefit of the 1911 strike proved to be the impetus it gave to the emerging workers' cooperatives movement. Discussions about establishing cooperatives had begun as early as 1905. A cooperative store in Coleman may have been the result of these meetings, but it only survived until 1908.⁴² By the conclusion of the 1911 strike, however, miners' cooperatives were thriving. At Hillcrest, a cooperative society began in 1912 with an authorized capital of \$10,000.⁴³ In the first months of business it achieved "a success far beyond their expectation", and was forced to triple its staff. The society's shares were held by "miners and men connected with the mines" in Hillcrest, Frank, Bellevue, Lille,

Burmis and Passburg."⁴⁴ Expansion of the store continued during 1912 and business necessitated the opening of a "pipes and tobacco" section. In its first year of operation, the managing secretary of the Hillcrest cooperative society reported a net profit of 94 per cent on paid up capital. At the end of 1913 sales were steadily increasing.⁴⁵

Successes at Hillcrest, Coleman, and Fernie, B.C. encouraged the formation of the Frank Cooperative Society in 1912. There, James Lancashire of the Fernie Cooperative Store helped organize fifty local men.⁴⁶ Spearheaded by Frank Wegr and James Kennedy, the new society offered shares at five dollars. By the end of 1912, the manager Jean Schnurr reported the purchase of Frank Demoustiz's store building and its removal to the new townsite away from the danger zone under Turtle Mountain.⁴⁷

Cooperative activity throughout the Pass proved very destructive indeed to the livelihood of the region's businessmen. It was estimated that the 1911 strike and the cooperatives precipitated a drop of 20 to 35 per cent in the sale of "fancy" goods, and a drop of 5 to 25 per cent in business for general merchants. The largest retailing outlets recorded 35 per cent declines at some points during the strike months. Business did not reach normal levels again until 1913.⁴⁸

Hotel owners and other holders of liquor licenses also faced their share of challenges in normal times. There were good profits to be made but the clientele were rugged, demanding, and often drank to excess in an attempt to escape the harsh realities of coal mining life. Their drinking habits and the licensees' determination to cater to them led to frequent violations of liquor regulations and a great deal of rowdiness in bars. Staying open after legal drinking hours or on Sundays and holidays were infractions regularly practised by the hotels at the risk of suspension or loss of their license. In 1901, an added bonus for staying open on Sunday in Blairmore was the chance to serve customers who came all the way from Fernie where the local constable strictly enforced liquor regulations.⁴⁹



Figure 17:
Coleman, Alberta, 1911
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

The local Boards of License Commissioners in Alberta were not inactive either. Harry Howard of the Cosmopolitan Hotel, Blairmore, was often found at fault, and in 1911 had his license revoked. As a result of this and other incidents, Howard eventually sold his hotel to A. A. Sparks, another local Pass businessman.⁵⁰ Steve Manahan, also a hotel owner, complained bitterly in court when his license for the Coleman Hotel was suspended. Manahan accused the complaining officer, Corporal Kimberley, of visiting a "disorderly house" and not laying charges against its owner and inmates.⁵¹

Michael Rosse also complained about treatment by license commissioners. He held the first wholesale liquor license in Blairmore for the sale of liquor over the counter in a store, or by door to door canvassing. In a letter to the editor of the local paper, Rosse recounted that he opened the store "having invested therein, every dollar which I had saved working in the mines at Lille." However, after collecting an impressive stock of liquors "largely in view of the Italian patronage enjoyed," he blamed his bankruptcy in 1907 on what he considered persecution at the hands of the license commissioners. Rosse reminded local politicians that he and his Italian countrymen had supported the Liberals in the last election. Those "people of influence" on the Board of License Commissioners (O. E. Bailie, A. Goyette, both Frank merchants of furniture and wallpaper, and James Robertson) were warned to expect a change of allegiance at the next visit to the voting booths. Rosse translated his threats into action. He ran successfully for the position of Blairmore town councillor in 1913 after failing in the 1911 ballot. He also resumed his activity in the liquor business in partnership with W. A. Beebe and A. A. Sparks, both prominent Pass businessmen.⁵²

"Drunken brawls"⁵³ in bars were also a concern although owners provided a "snake room" where drunken stupors or hallucinations could be slept off until the mine whistles announcing a shift change called the offending miner back to his job. One man remembered that:⁵⁴

. . . a man may lose complete control of himself, roll on the floor, pulling what little money . . . [he] had left in . . . [his] pockets to scatter around . . .

Snake rooms were provided for men to recover in, after their reign of debauchery.

In addition to these problems, licensed proprietors and traders faced competition for the sale of alcohol from a variety of illegal sources. In the red light, or "tenderloin", district, liquor was commonly available and sold without a license. Although seven women were charged with this offense in 1911 and fined from \$100 to \$250 each, the practice undoubtedly continued. Blind pigs selling bootleg liquor also operated in competition with legally licensed hotels. Shacks in Burmis raided in 1912 resulted in Nick Verstuck being fined \$100 for selling liquor illegally. In 1910, Coleman was described as a "place where cheap drinks may be had and where blind pigs run amuck." In addition, pedlars sold liquor door to door, sometimes without licenses, "day after day."⁵⁵

The 1911 strike prompted miners to search for even cheaper sources of alcohol. Groups of miners banded together to buy a carload of beer kegs for special occasions.⁵⁶ Sometimes this could produce amusing results, as in the case of those living in Maple Leaf Bush Town below the Mohawk tipple. As Adie Rinaldi recalled:⁵⁷

some kegs contained dozens of quart bottles of beer and others would be four or eight gallons of draft beer. These were usually rolled down the hill. If a keg hit the railway track it would break open and beer would spray all over.

As well, miners' clubs were formed to obtain liquor licenses, though the members claimed that they were associations for reading and debating.⁵⁸

By 1912, the legally licensed liquor dealers faced a chaotic situation. Banding together in a "Liquor Association," these dealers met regularly to establish "a price list, affecting both wholesale and retail dealers." Each member agreed to put up \$100 to be forfeited if he violated any liquor laws. It was hoped that this self-imposed control would regulate the sale and use of liquor in the Pass.⁵⁹

Pass businessmen responded to irregularities in the economy in a variety of ways. Most businessmen came to realize that depending on customers in only one town was potentially harmful and their efforts to counteract the



Figure 18:

Belly up to the bar, boys!

(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

ups and downs of the local economy resulted in attempts to attract customers from other towns. The C.P.R. offered reduced fares for travel between Pass towns on holidays. On Victoria Day 1907, for example, the C.P.R. charged only a one and one-third fare for a round trip ticket between any two points in the Pass.⁶⁰ Holiday excursions were not frequent enough to improve business, however, and merchants tried other means to attract customers. Many stores, like the Coleman Mercantile in 1909, offered to pay the fares of customers who purchased a minimum of ten dollars in their store. At their close-out sale in October 1913, the competition for customers forced them to lower the minimum purchase to five dollars. Blairmore businessmen offered late night shopping in 1913, attracting an estimated 400 customers in one evening. With a long one-sided main street, Blairmore merchants also found it necessary to have a horse-drawn streetcar, which included a separate ladies' section. Earlier pressure had failed to force the C.P.R. to move its railway line further south so the town could have a two-sided commercial street.⁶¹

Another means of tapping business in other towns was to open branch stores. On the British Columbia side of the Pass, the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company opened company stores in all their mine towns: Morrisey, Coal Creek, Fernie and Michel. The subsequent owners of these stores, Trites and Woods, continued to maintain the separate establishments.⁶² The cooperative stores in British Columbia and Alberta also maintained stores in as many towns as possible. Other businesses attempted to open branch stores as well. Chutfield's Jewelry of Frank opened a second store in Bellevue. The Blairmore jeweller, S. Trono, opened a branch store in Natal, British Columbia in 1912. Clovis Fauvre, who started by managing the Lille Hotel, then opened the Lille liquor store, bought a liquor store in Coleman and obtained an interest in the Bellevue Hotel.⁶³ A. A. Sparks, who sold the Coleman liquor store to Fauvre, in turn purchased the Cosmopolitan Hotel from Harry Howard in Blairmore. Sparks also had an interest in the Alberta Hotel at Blairmore. The Frank Wine and Spirit Company was a retail outlet for the Fort Steele Brewery which, through its principal owner A. Mutz, was involved in hotels in other Pass towns. A. Manuel of the Frank Hotel opened a hotel in Burmis when the Davenport Coal Company began mining operations. J. W. Gresham,

a Blairmore blacksmith, purchased lots in Bellevue. He began work there during the 1912 building boom.⁶⁴

Branch outlets helped insulate the parent business from the periodic slumps of the local coal mine. Merchants in towns where a mine closed permanently, however, had no choice but to relocate. Although some businesses left the Pass area, others chose to move to more prosperous Pass towns. The Kerr brothers, who operated a general store in Passburg, successfully made the move to Bellevue. F. M. Thompson, "merchant tailor of the Pass," survived the closure of Lille by relocating to Blairmore. Thompson acquired the store of Mr. Mar On as well as the Blairmore Cash Trading Company. Despite a destructive fire in 1919 that made a new structure necessary, the Thompson store still operates in Blairmore.⁶⁵

Merchants also used door to door canvassing to solicit customers in other towns. In the early years of its development, Lille was served actively by agents from Frank stores. The added transportation costs of bringing goods in on the Frank and Grassy Mountain Railway and the small number of customers residing in the town prompted Lille merchants to add a surcharge of 5 to 7 per cent. These higher prices left them open to competition from Frank merchants who could absorb the costs of solicitation in Lille because of their already existing clientele in Frank.⁶⁶ Lille customers were sensitive to these price differences. As one miner noted⁶⁷

You draw your cheque and go to the store and after you come out of the store it don't take much of a savings bank to handle what you have left. . . . If I want anything I come to Frank to get it.

Another scheme aimed at increasing commercial activity in the various coal towns was the proposal to build an electric railway system through the Pass. Merchants claimed that such a system would be more efficient and cheaper than the existing railway and that it would permit more contact between towns now isolated because of the poor quality of the roads. Organizational efforts began in 1907 when several local merchants obtained a charter for the Crow's Nest and Prairie Electric Railway Company. Three Coleman businessmen were involved: Alexander Cameron,

jeweller; Duncan J. McIntyre, merchant; and Walter Ross McRae, banker. Thomas Smith, a Frank merchant, and James H. Schofield, a store owner in Pincher Creek joined them. These men envisioned an electric railway running from the western end of Crow's Nest Lake eastward through Coleman, Blairmore, Frank, Bellevue, Lundbreck, Cowley, and Pincher Creek. By 1909 the railway was still in the conceptual stage, causing one observer to note that although it was "again a live issue . . . we fear . . . it may turn out to be an air line."⁶⁸

Its promoters thought that the project would require an authorized capital of \$150,000, and from the outset they had difficulties attracting investment. The general recession in business activities during 1908 delayed the scheme, but improved prospects in 1909 helped to revive the idea of an electric railway. Mr. A. D. McPherson of Winnipeg came to the Pass in December 1909 to examine the prospects, and negotiations with him and his backers continued until 1910. At issue was a proposed twenty year franchise on the line and an exemption from all taxation. In return for these concessions the company would have charged a five cent fare and offered thirty minute service from end to end on the line, with an operating schedule of eighteen hours daily.⁶⁹

These negotiations proved fruitless, however, and by 1911 the lengthy coal strike had intervened. Following this interruption, the proposal for an electric railway emerged again, spearheaded this time by prominent Pass businessman W. A. Beebe. The estimated construction cost had escalated from \$150,000 to \$250,000. Hourly service was promised for a line connecting Cowley, Lundbreck, Burmis, Passburg, Maple Leaf, Bellevue, Hillcrest, Frank, Blairmore, Coleman, Carbondale, and the settlement at the west end of Crow's Nest Lake. The offices, powerhouse and car barns were to be stationed in Blairmore.⁷⁰ Possibly seeing an advantage in a line that would allow miners settled in other towns to work in their operations, the West Canadian Collieries' company manager, Robert Coulthard, took a direct interest in the project. Widespread opinion in the Pass also suggested that English capital was involved in the newly incorporated Crow's Nest Pass Street Railway Company.⁷¹

Again, however, no development took place, although "four wealthy New York investors" did tour the area later in 1912. With the onset of a general economic depression in 1913 and the financial problems created by World War I, plans for an electric railroad system in the Pass were never revived.⁷²

Some resident businessmen responded to the recurring slumps in the Pass coal economy by diversifying their interests. The variety of approaches undertaken included the creation of a stock exchange for those investing in Alberta's 1914 oil boom.⁷³ On an individual level, several businessmen tried to expand their interests.

W. A. Beebe, who started in business as a real estate agent in Frank, also financed house purchases, rented houses, and sold all types of insurance. Beebe eventually left Frank for better prospects in Blairmore. With Cosmopolitan Hotel owner Harry Howard and O. E. S. Whiteside, manager of West Canadian Collieries and later the International Coal and Coke Company, Coleman, Beebe purchased the former store building of the Crow's Nest Jobbing Company. Eventually, the structure was converted into the Blairmore Opera House.⁷⁴ A partner in the liquor trade with Michael Rosse of Blairmore, Beebe also promoted the Northern Coal and Coke Company with H. Kanouse and Harry J. Matheson. Matheson owned coal property south of Blairmore, and also tried to sell lots for Lake City at the eastern edge of Crow's Nest Lake. Alfred Manuel, owner of the Frank and Burmis hotels, joined A. Mutz, another Pass hotel owner, (donor of the Mutz Cup for the Alberta Pass soccer champions) to form the Blairmore Coal and Coke Company.⁷⁵

James H. Farmer's case was another example of the inclination of Pass businessmen to become involved in a variety of activities. Originally settling in Blairmore, Farmer tried unsuccessfully to develop coal properties south of the Crow's Nest Railway corridor. A manager for the Union Bank in several Pass towns, Farmer finally settled in Blairmore where he served as mayor from 1926 to 1933.⁷⁶

Real estate was a typical area of interest for Crow's Nest Pass businessmen seeking to escape the vagaries of the coal economy. James Farmer and his colleague Joe Grafton developed a new district in Coleman called Grafton Town. They bought the land from the Calgary and Edmonton Land Company and offered two sizes of lots: 50' x 100' for \$125 to \$200, and one-acre for \$300. The partnership of H. E. Lyons and Hinds was also active in the real estate business in the Pass. Throughout the spring and summer of 1910 these men did a "booming" business loaning money (possibly as agents of a trust company) for the purchase or construction of houses.⁷⁷ The same partnership handled the sale of lots in Beaver Mines when that townsite opened. Lyons and Hinds also found buyers in the Pass for real estate in Calgary, selling lots in Leland Park, Hillhurst and Houndsfield Heights. They had reputedly sold \$20,000 worth of property in Calgary by guaranteeing to repurchase the property in four years if customers were not satisfied. They predicted, however, that buyers would triple their purchase price in three years.⁷⁸

Other individuals in the Pass also tried to profit from real estate sales. James Redfern, a carpenter in Passburg, had moved to the area from Taber with his former employer, William Hamilton, part owner and manager of Leitch Collieries Ltd. Redfern purchased a block of land north of the company's Passburg townsite, subdivided the land and tried to sell lots. Unfortunately, the only buyer was the coal supply supervisor of the Great Northern Railway. Robert Connelly, an early settler in the Bellevue area, also subdivided land into lots and profited from Bellevue's growth. H. W. Pelletier, opened a subdivision in Blairmore as well as selling lots at Lake City on the eastern end of Crow's Nest Lake.⁷⁹

There were, though, difficulties associated with the real estate business. At one point, the reputations of local Pass agents were blackened when a group went through the district peddling worthless or non-existent properties in other western towns. Most Pass communities had laws to prevent these practices and to discourage outside competition in the local real estate market. In Fernie, the fee for transient agents was \$100 for six months. Prosecution of those caught ignoring the

requirement could bring a \$100 fine or thirty days in jail, sometimes with hard labour.⁸⁰

Despite these penalties a number of abuses were reported in 1913 because, according to the American consul in Fernie, the financial depression of 1913 was delayed in coming to the Pass. Consequently, the Pass was "a rather fertile field for outside schemes." A newly arrived immigrant was sold a lot at a very reasonable price, paying small monthly payments. Shortly afterwards, the man would be approached again and convinced to sell his lot at \$50 to \$100 higher. Then the agent would advise him to make another investment, with a number of friends, in more lots. The group would then be left owning lots in towns with questionable futures. Responding to these schemes, the local boards of trade opened an "intelligence office" for people to check the credibility of their salesmen, and shortly afterwards, the "travelling real estate sharks . . . [became] . . . extinct and passed into oblivion."⁸¹ On the Alberta side of the Pass the scheme was worked with equal success. In 1914, victims of one syndicate "met at Blairmore's Cosmopolitan Hotel to share their experiences . . ."⁸² in an attempt to prevent a repetition of the swindle.

To counter the instability of the coal economy, efforts were made to establish other industries in the Crow's Nest Pass. Local townspeople became involved through direct investment, assistance from town councils, and always enthusiastic encouragement. In one example, H. E. Lyons, supported by the mayor of Medicine Hat and the general manager of the Alberta Clay Products Ltd., tried to develop local Pass clay deposits. He attempted to entice the C.P.R. to build a spurline southwest from Crow's Nest Lake to carry the clay to processing plants in Medicine Hat.⁸³

Although unsuccessful in this enterprise, Lyons nevertheless continued to promote other projects. For the North Kootenay Pass Coal Company, Lyons and his partner Hinds sold 20,000 shares at ten cents each to "the leading men of the Pass." The North Kootenay Pass Coal Company held extensive coal deposits south of the railway corridor. Also involved in

these attempts to develop coal deposits in this area were other Pass businessmen: J. H. Farmer, Blairmore, bank manager; Thomas F. O'Hagen, Lille, medical doctor; and John Angus McDonald, part owner of the Union Hotel, Frank.⁸⁴

More successful efforts eventually resulted in the construction and operation of the Rocky Mountain Cement Company in Blairmore. In the creation of this company, the importance of local input was obvious. Beginning in 1907, the organizers of the company, principally W. J. Budd, approached the town of Frank for development concessions. These included the extension of the Frank water main to their property, an exemption from all but school taxes for ten years, a \$5000 cash bonus to be paid as soon as the company had expended \$10,000, and a guarantee from the council on the sale of \$30,000 in company bonds. According to the editor of the Frank Paper, Mark Drumm, this was the most important proposal the town council had yet considered. Nevertheless, Drumm, in opposition to the majority of the town council, did not support granting the concessions. In the end, the council was discouraged from doing so by Alberta's minister of Public Works, A. B. Cushing.⁸⁵

By failing to respond favourably to the concession proposals, Frank businessmen lost the cement plant to neighbouring Blairmore where residents tried to overcome provincial opposition to tax concessions with a petition, and a "liberal subscription" for the company's bonds. With this capital and an additional \$200,000 from the sale of bonds to the Spokane International Railway, the Rocky Mountain Cement Plant began construction of several major buildings.⁸⁶ The local deposits of limestone were 95 per cent pure, and the beds of clay shale were only 2500 feet from the mill. The company, consequently, could produce good cement at a lower cost than that which came from Exshaw. By 1910, annual production was 6000 barrels and despite a fire that caused \$2000 damage in the large grinding room, the level of production was sustained in 1911. The firm sold cement in Spokane, and found a market for their lime in Washington state. Plans for greatly increased production were carried out in 1912, raising the plant's capacity to 1000 barrels daily. By 1913, the Rocky Mountain Cement Plant recorded its largest pay day and by

1914, employed ninety men. In August of that year, however, the plant was forced to close when the Canadian economy slowed. The company was eventually purchased by the Canada Cement Company in 1919.⁸⁷

With industrial diversification, businessmen of the Crow's Nest Pass hoped to counter the fluctuating fortunes of the coal industry. Although these enterprises generally proved incapable of achieving long term stability, they did provide some alternatives for employment and commerce in the Pass and helped Pass businessmen to cope with the uncertainty of the coal economy.

Supplementary industries, however, could not replace a prosperous coal economy: they alone could not support thriving towns when the local coal mines failed. By 1915, little remained of the communities of Burmis, Lundbreck, Passburg, Lille and Beaver Mines because the coal mines around which they had been formed had ceased operations. The workers left to find jobs at other mines, forcing the closure of the small businesses and shops. In the end, despite the best efforts of the residents to make their towns economically viable, the destiny of the coal towns remained inseparable from the fate of the region's coal mines.

Conclusion

"THE REGRET OF MY LIFE"¹

Despite the grand hopes and predictions of their founders, most of the coal mining companies on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass did not survive past 1915. Many factors contributed to the demise of all but five of the twelve companies that had operated in the region prior to the First World War. Certainly day-to-day operational problems affected the fortunes of the various mines. The quality and lie of the Pass coal seams proved unpredictable, and production could be drastically reduced by the pinching out of a seam or a slight change in the composition of the coal. As well, accidents such as coal falls and explosions were not uncommon and, depending on the extent of the mishap, could halt operations or close down parts of a mine. A breakdown in the haulage system or in the processing plant could have the same effect and as these systems became more elaborate and complex the risk of disruption by mechanical failure increased. In addition, repairs generally had to be made on site with improvised tools and parts since the manufacturers were located thousands of miles away. Even when the level of production remained steady, there was no guarantee that the coal would reach its market. Frequent rail car shortages forced mine owners to reduce or even halt production. Such interruptions did not improve a mine's ability to compete and survive in the marketplace.

Operational problems, however, could be overcome, and disruptions in production did not always have serious consequences if the company had a sound financial basis. For most of the mines in this region, though, financial support was as uncertain as the quality of the coal seams or the supply of railway cars. Many of the entrepreneurs were independently wealthy men but the cost of finding, buying, and developing coal lands generally absorbed most of their operating capital. Both large and small companies found their resources strained by initial development costs. In 1903, the owners of West Canadian Collieries, one of the first

companies to establish a mine in the region and ultimately one of the most successful, claimed that the payments on their coal leases were becoming onerous. J. J. Fleutot, one of the company's managers, wrote to the federal government and pleaded for an extension:²

Owing to the very heavy expenses incurred by our company . . . in the development of its coal claims near Frank [Lille] necessitating a great deal of dead work besides the building of seven miles of standard guage railway, also the construction of coke ovens this spring, I thought it imperative to beg of you an extension of one year's time on the second payment due shortly on the claims. . . . By favouring our request you will greatly help an industry yet in its infancy, an industry which is bound to be successful.

The owners of the Breckenridge and Lund mine at Lundbreck found themselves in the same predicament. In 1907, John Breckenridge, one of the owners, explained his company's case in a letter to the Department of the Interior:³

I may say that if you can arrange I would like a little more time to make final payments [for coal rights] as we have been to a great deal of expense developing and placing Mine Plant equipment and the shortage of cars [on the C.P.R.] the past winter has caused our company considerable loss by not being able to work the mine more than one third of the time.

Coal claim payments also posed a problem for the newly formed Leitch Collieries in 1907. In April and June, the owners of the company requested extensions on their land payments. Having received no reply, the president Malcolm Leitch addressed the company's third plea for a payment postponement directly to Prime Minister Laurier. Leitch noted that the company had already paid \$36,842.45, just over half of the full payment due. They would be able, he claimed, to make the payment due May 1908, but needed an extension on the due date of the interest. Leitch wrote:

We are unable to pay this interest on account of having expended all available funds in developing and improving the property and there is still a large amount to be expended to put the mines on a shipping basis . . . all this work is in progress and is being hurried to completion, also the work of driving tunnels on coal seams is being forced to the utmost (miners are working two shifts) to attain a large output at the earliest possible date.

The cost of coal leases alone might not have been a source of financial

concern had it not been for the other substantial costs of developing and operating a coal mine. The peculiar geology of the region added to the expense of the mining process. The coal seams lay at steeply pitched angles, forcing the use of the room and pillar method. This method wasted coal and required major timber work to support the rooms and tunnels. Most importantly, the room and pillar method was labour intensive because the steep pitch of the rooms prevented the use of labour saving machinery at the coal face. For some operators, the unusually difficult and dangerous conditions that prevailed in their mines pushed the cost of labour even higher.

Mine owners tried to make up for the high cost of the labour intensive work underground by mechanizing above ground operations. The coal operators sought to achieve a system where "not one pound of coal ever stops moving from the moment it leaves the working face until it finds itself in a railroad car."⁴ Installing the latest and most efficient processing equipment, however, required not only a large initial outlay of capital, but also regular expenditures on upgrading and expanding the original plant. Competition for markets was intense, and the mines had to be capable of filling any contract, no matter how large, as soon as it became available. If one company improved its productive capability the others risked losing their markets if they did not do the same. This competitive drive triggered a continual round of expensive improvements to tipple facilities. The Breckenridge and Lund Coal Company completed its first tipple by 1906 and by 1910 had already significantly upgraded it with money from a \$126,000 mortgage.⁵ The above ground facilities at the Galbraith Coal Company mine were improved in 1909, only two years after completion.⁶ At the Maple Leaf Coal Company on the eastern outskirts of Bellevue, the initial tipple installation was finished by the spring of 1908 but as early as 1909 additions were made. They continued to work on the plant until late 1911 with a total cost of approximately \$30,000.⁷

Similarly, the processing facilities at the Davenport Coal Company's mine near Burmis were built in 1910 and then improved in 1912.⁸ Near the site of Beaver Mines, the Western Oil and Coal Consolidated Company set

up a surface plant in 1909, and then upgraded and expanded it in 1912. It was later estimated that the price for these facilities exceeded \$560,000.⁹ The first tipple at the Hillcrest Coal and Coke Company mine, erected in 1907 at a cost of around \$83,000, was replaced by the company's new owners in the winter of 1911-12 at a cost of \$125,000.¹⁰ At Frank where the Canadian-American Coal and Coke Company established its mine in 1901, the Frank Slide in April 1903 complicated surface plant development. The first tipple, constructed in 1901 at a cost of \$200,000, was destroyed in the Slide and had to be replaced. Although this task took until 1905 to complete, further major changes began in 1909.¹¹ The International Coal and Coke Company spent approximately \$150,000 on its initial surface plant facilities at Coleman. Five years later, in 1908, the Company invested an additional \$128,955 to upgrade the original structures.¹²

Some mine operators had significant expenses apart from those involved in building and continually upgrading tipple facilities. At Lille, Beaver Mines and Hillcrest the cost of constructing and maintaining spur lines added to the cost of producing, processing, and marketing each ton of coal. The Beaver Mines spur line, for example, cost the company some \$450,000 to build. Once completed, it remained a source of difficulties, delays and extra expenses.¹⁷ The other two spur lines, though shorter and in that sense perhaps less costly, still caused regular problems for the companies. Other mine operators spent large amounts of capital importing and constructing coke ovens and slack washeries in order to take advantage of the lucrative coke market.

During the proceedings of the Alberta Coal Commission of 1925, John T. Stirling, Chief Inspector of Mines for the province, estimated that the total investment in coal mines in the province to 1925 had been \$11,752,187. Of this amount, he estimated that some \$5,250,000 or nearly half of the total, had been invested in the mines of the Crow's Nest Pass. This is an impressive statistic, and testifies to the size of the mining companies' financial worries.

The financial situation of many of these mining companies probably would not have been so desperate had the markets for coal and coke remained

strong. They might then have seen a better and more immediate return on their investments. Unfortunately, the boom economy and markets of the early years of the twentieth century did not last as long as the companies had assumed when making their capital investments. From 1901 to 1907, the capital committed to developing the mines seemed well justified. The Canadian economy, evolving and expanding at a rapid rate, created great confidence in the country and its future. In western Canada, the early years of the century witnessed an impressive growth in population, in agricultural and industrial development, and in investment in all sectors of the economy. The region that was soon to become the province of Alberta certainly shared in the benefits of this expansion. From 1901 to 1911, the population of the cities of Edmonton and Calgary rose dramatically from 4,176 and 4,392 to 31,064 and 43,704 respectively.¹⁴ Some of these people came to the area to take advantage of high prices for agricultural products and the availability of farm land. Others came to develop or work on proposed railway lines, while still other enterprising individuals became involved in the booming real estate business in the cities and towns. As well, timbering and mining operations attracted large numbers of people, sometimes to very remote areas.

In this context, the rapid and extensive development of the coal reserves on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass appeared reasonable. As one mine operator later lamented, the development expenditure he advised at the time "was just what any sane mining man would have done under the circumstances."¹⁵ Predictions based on boom markets are, as a rule, distorted. Many of the mine operators had to learn this lesson through bitter experience. The first serious indication of trouble for the mines came long before 1911. In 1907, a severe shortage of railway cars reduced profits for that year and in 1908 a recession held for the first half of the year. Production for that year did not even match that of 1907. Prospects for the mines improved later in 1908 and into 1909 such that three new companies began operations. The Davenport Coal Company worked seams at Burmis, Western Oil and Coal Consolidated Company opened its Beaver Mines site, and the McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company set up its mine across the tracks from International at Coleman. Despite

a strike in 1909 and the closure of one mine at Lundbreck - the Alberta Coal and Coke Company - production grew to a level near 400,000 tons for the year, an increase of 100,000 tons over the previous year.

The mines enjoyed their most productive year in 1910. The economy was thriving once again and markets were very strong, no doubt leading some entrepreneurs to view the problems of 1908 as aberrations in the generally rosy economic outlook. Production in 1910 reached 645,000 tons. Operators looked forward to an even better year in 1911.

By then, the productive capability of many of the mines had been improved by renovations and additions to the surface facilities. On 31 March however, the agreement with the miners' union expired and the miners went on strike. The walk-out lasted until November and, consequently, production for the year was far below even the 1906 levels. Some mines, however, profited from the strike. The Breckenridge and Lund mine at Lundbreck¹⁶ and the Leitch Collieries mine at Police Flats hired non-union workers and maintained full production. For both companies, 1911 proved to be the most productive year on record. Other companies used the disruption in work to upgrade and make additions to their facilities. West Canadian Collieries installed new equipment at its Blairmore South mine and the new owners of the Hillcrest mine did the same.¹⁷

At certain mines, however, the long strike had only negative consequences. The loss of revenue during the strike was largely responsible for the decision to close the Galbraith Coal Company's mine at Lundbreck in 1912.¹⁸ West Canadian Collieries' mine at Lille also closed in 1912 due partially to the loss of coke markets during the strike. At the Breckenridge and Lund mine, the problems faced in 1912 were slightly different. After having a record year in 1911, the owners of this small operation found that their mine simply could not compete once the other mines had resumed production.¹⁹

Those companies that survived the strike had to fight to regain their markets. During the strike, the federal government suspended duty on

American coal entering the country west of Sault Ste. Marie, creating an oversupply. By the beginning of 1912 the glut still existed making it difficult for Pass mines to reestablish production.²⁰ Eventually, prices were cut in an attempt to re-enter the market²¹ and, by the end of 1912, production had nearly reached the previous record high set in 1910. In 1913, a new production record was set as the mines produced 680,000 tons of coal. West Canadian Collieries took advantage of the good market by opening their Greenhill mine near Blairmore.

For most companies, however, 1913 was the last really productive year. A mild winter in 1913-14, recession, and war played havoc with the demand for coal and coke and in 1914 and 1915 coal production sunk to 400,000 and 365,000 tons respectively. The Davenport Coal Company ceased operations in Burmis in 1914 and West Canadian Collieries closed its Blairmore South mine the same year. In 1915 three more mines closed - the Maple Leaf Coal Company, Leitch Collieries, and Beaver Mines - leaving only five companies still operating on the Alberta side of the Crow's Nest Pass. Those that survived generally did well once war time demands boosted the economy. Production levels, however, did not reach or surpass the pre-war high set in 1913 until 1920.

Many factors contributed to the demise of these coal companies and the immediate reasons for ceasing operations varied. In some cases, the mines had reached the boundaries of the company's leases. In others, the quality of the coal seam had deteriorated, significantly reducing the profit margin of the company. Perhaps the most important factor, however, was the uncertainty and volatility of the markets. Based on the expanding markets of the opening years of the century, twelve coal companies operating in a large and rich field did not seem unreasonable. With the stabilization of the markets for coal, however, it soon became apparent that twelve coal companies could produce a great deal more coal than could be consumed. As early as 1913 it was estimated that the mines could produce twice the amount required by the C.P.R., then the largest coal consumer on the Alberta side of the Pass. Like so many other industries in the west and in the rest of Canada the "productive capability" of the mines "had greatly surpassed the absorptive capacity

of the Canadian market."²² Perhaps one or two of these coal mines could have held on a few years longer if their coal had been of a higher quality, if the seam had been less difficult, or if their investors had been more generous. Ultimately, however, it was simply unprofitable to operate a mine that had to compete with so many others for such a small market.

Four coal mining companies were still operating in the Alberta Pass region after the First World War. West Canadian Collieries had working mines at Bellevue, Greenhill, and, much later, at Adanac. The International Coal and Coke Company and the McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company at Coleman, and Hillcrest Collieries' mine at Hillcrest continued to operate their mines. To a certain extent, the war had revived the fortunes of these remaining mines, but with the development of new technologies and new fuels during the inter-war years and with the onset of the Depression, coal markets once again were threatened. In an attempt to adjust to the new market situation, the companies began a process of reorganization, retrenchment, and amalgamation. The two mines at Coleman, McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company and International Coal and Coke Company, were united under the same management in 1935, becoming the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company Limited. In 1939 the Hillcrest and Mohawk Collieries amalgamated to form Hillcrest-Mohawk Collieries. After World War II, increasingly tight markets led Hillcrest-Mohawk and Consolidated mines to merge to form a new company, Coleman Collieries, in 1952. Only West Canadian Collieries avoided change over its long history.

The discovery of the Leduc oil field in 1947 ensured the C.P.R. of a source of diesel fuel and the conversion from steam coal began. By the 1950s, the two surviving coal companies in the Pass, West Canadian Collieries and Coleman Collieries, were desperately trying to find new markets. West Canadian Collieries failed and in 1957 closed its last two operating mines, those at Bellevue and Greenhill. Coleman Collieries was more fortunate. It secured Japanese contracts that kept its mines open until 1983, when the loss of this final market brought an end to the coal mining era in the Crowsnest Pass.

ENDNOTES

Introduction

"IF EVER THERE WAS A RAILWAY THROUGH THAT COUNTRY"1

1. Lethbridge Herald, 18 July 1925, "C.A. Little Remembers".
2. Certainly explorers, fur traders and missionaries were already familiar with southeastern British Columbia and southwestern Alberta before 1855. Peter Fidler, a Hudson's Bay Company surveyor, had visited southern Alberta as early as 1792. In 1807, David Thompson first travelled through Howse Pass (named but not explored by Howse) and, as a result, the Columbia and Kootenay valleys were opened to trade and travel. By 1810 Joseph Howse had established a Hudson's Bay Company post, Fort Kootenai, on the Tobacco Plains. Other visitors to the area were Alexander Henry, Gabriel Franchise, Ross Cox, Alexander Ross, Sir George Simpson, David Douglas (botanist), Fathers Blanchet and Demers (1838), and Father de Smet (1845). Thomas Blakiston, leading a section of the Palliser Expedition of 1857-1860, travelled through two passes south of the Crow's Nest Pass in 1858. See W. J. Cousins, "A History of the Crow's Nest Pass" (M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1955); F. J. Netherton, "Development of Communication Routes in the Kootenays," paper presented to Libby Branch, Montana Historical Society Museum, Libby Dam Visitor Centre, 25 June 1977. John M. Gibbon, Steel of Empire, (Toronto: n.p., 1935) credits Joseph Ashley with the gold discovery here in 1863. Another account of these discoveries credits a group of prospectors that left Britain in search of gold in 1849. Travelling around the Horn of South America, they landed in California, and then travelled overland to the Cariboo. One party followed the Kootenay River and discovered placer gold

at Finlay Creek in 1862. Returning the next year they found gold at Wild Horse Creek (originally named Stud Horse Creek), forty miles short of their destination. R. T. Richardson, "Talks with Oldtimers," 13 August 1951, Fort Steele Archives [herein after cited as FSA].

3. Born in Hereford, England in 1840, Phillips came to Canada at age twenty-four to work for the Hudson's Bay Company. Following the Oregon boundary dispute Phillips moved north of the 49th parallel into the Tobacco Plains area. Quitting the Company when their Fort Kootenai post closed in 1869, Phillips trapped, prospected and explored the area. These activities eventually led him into the Elk River Valley. Later, Phillips became the government Indian agent at Fort Steele and Tobacco Plains. Cranbrook Herald, 11 May 1911. Michael Phillips is interviewed in this issue.
4. Two excursions took place. One was in the fall of 1873 with John Collins, another former Hudson's Bay Company trader. They went as far as "Michel" creek and noticed buffalo hair on the trees in the creek valley looking east. The second trip occurred in the summer of 1874, and included Mr. Woods owner of the Wild Horse Creek sawmill, William Saunders, and Jim Morrissey. Phillips and his party blazed a trail during the summer and named Coal Creek, Michel Creek, and Morrissey Creek. Phillips later thought he may have seen the area in the 1860s, crossing through the Crow's Nest Pass, then travelling south along the foothills, and back east over the mountains through the South Kootenay or South Boundary Pass. Cranbrook Herald, 11 May 1911. W. J. Cousins, paper presented on Crow's Nest Pass, n.d., Library, University of Lethbridge.
5. Calgary Herald, W. J. Cousins, 15 June 1962.

6. J. J. Crabb, "Coal Mining in S. E. British Columbia: An Historical Outline", Journal of the Alberta Society of Petroleum Geologists, X (July-August 1962).
7. Lethbridge Herald, 14 February 1913. "George Mills Remembers." Mills later became involved in the formation of Hillcrest Collieries.
8. Women's Institute of Alberta, A History of the Early Days of Pincher Creek District and of the Southern Mountains, Glenbow-Alberta Institute [herein after cited as GAI]. See also Crow's Nest Pass Historical Society, Crowsnest and its People, (Calgary: Friesen & Sons, 1979), pp. 662-63.
9. A. F. Flucke, "A History of Mining in British Columbia," n.d., library, University of Saskatchewan; Craig Weir, "Bluebell: A Mining Sage", Canada West Magazine, IV (Summer 1972).
10. W. N. Sage, British Columbia and the United States: The North Pacific Slope from Fur Trade to Aviation, (n.p.: n.p., 1942), passim.
11. Ibid.; A. F. Flucke, op. cit.
12. Toronto World, 12 April 1904; Fourth Annual Report, 1 March 1901, President Cox's Address to the Shareholders, Crow's Nest Pass Company Papers, GAI.
13. By 1887 Fernie was already a long time resident in the Fort Steele area. Born 1837 in Kimbolton, Huntingdonshire, England, William Fernie was the son of Thomas Fernie, a local medical doctor who "attended the Duke of Manchester." William left home at age sixteen in 1853, and travelled to Australia, New Zealand, South America, and finally to North

America and British Columbia by 1860. Fernie came to the Fort Steele area in 1865 as a foreman on the Dewdney Trail section east of Fort Sheppard. He then joined the Big Bend rush of 1865, and then the Perry Creek finds in 1868. Returning to Fort Steele, Fernie became constable for the Kootenay area in 1871. In 1879 Fernie assumed the office of District Gold Commissioner from which he resigned in 1882. Possibly from this date he began prospecting the Pass coal deposits. Following the successful formation of the area's largest coal company, the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, Fernie moved to Victoria in 1901 where he lived with a Mr. Humphries, his housekeeper and gardener. Fernie died in 1921 and had two sisters surviving in the old country, as well as many nieces and nephews. William Fernie also had a brother, Peter Fernie, who was born 21 October 1830, in Allenbury, Huntingdonshire. Peter joined the army in 1848, fought in the Crimea and elsewhere, and found his way to Canada at the time of the Cariboo gold rush. Peter Fernie then went to Nanaimo where he worked for the Vancouver Coal Company before joining his brother in the Kootenay district by 1879. Peter stayed in this area ranching until 1886, when he moved back to Vancouver Island. While in the Kootenay area, Peter Fernie ran as an MPP the British Columbia but lost. W. N. Sage, *op. cit.*; Victoria Daily Times, 5 May 1921; Victoria Daily Colonist, 5 October 1915, and 17 May 1921; Ian Turner, "Crow's Nest", FSA; Ivorson Bayard, "History of Wardner", FSA.

14. Victoria Daily Times, 25 May 1902; "Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company", Mining and Engineering Record, n.d., Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company Papers, GAI; Backtracking with the Fernie Historical Association, 1967, pp. 23-24; J. J. Crabb, *op. cit.*
15. Baker was born in London 1830. Joining the navy in 1844, he served as a midshipman in the Crimean War. After attending

Cambridge, he travelled to the Far East and by 1884 found himself in Canada in the East Kootenay district. Here, he and his two sons bought what was known as "Chief Joseph's Prairie" for their Cranbrook estate. Disagreements between Baker and the local Kootenay Indians concerning the ownership of this land contributed to the decision to send Sam Steele and his R.N.W.M.P. into the area in 1887. When the C.P.R. reached the area, Baker arranged for it to develop his land for its new town, named Cranbrook after his estate. Baker successfully had scuttled the financial future of nearby Fort Steele whose residents were forced to move to Cranbrook. It has been suggested that John Galbraith of Fort Steele had lent Baker money and that the only way Galbraith could retrieve his money was to allow Baker's land at Cranbrook to be developed. R. T. Richardson, op. cit. Baker's reputation grew quickly in the community as one newspaper noted, "although Cranbrook . . . occupied an important position because it held Hyde V. Baker, the Pooh Bah, the Robinson Crusoe of the Selkirks with his man Friday [possibly a reference to Fernie]." Cranbrook Herald, 19 March 1908. In 1886, 1890 and 1892 Baker won the local provincial parliament seat although there were accusations of vote buying. Baker served as Minister of Mines and Education, Minister of Immigration, and as Provincial Secretary. See Sylvia Thrupp, "A History of the Cranbrook District" (M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1959); Martin Robin, The Company Province, 1871-1933, (Toronto: n.p.: 1972), passim.

16.

The company's authorized capital was four million with a provision that \$100,000 stock be subscribed, 10 per cent of this sum to be paid in to the company's treasury before directors were chosen. The railway gauge was to be not less than three feet. Construction was to start in two years by 28 April 1890, and be completed in five years.

17. Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 1897, pp. 493-546. Some 6.5 million acres were at their disposal now. The company was to pay a 5 per cent royalty on all gold and silver mined. The choice of land, although away from the line, would still be taken from the "immediate region." The 5 per cent royalty requirement was also struck from the charter.
18. Two contractors involved in this initial work on the rail line were Peter Lund and J. Breckenridge. They later opened a coal mine and founded the Alberta Crow's Nest Pass town of Lundbreck. Ivorson Bayard, op. cit.; Brief to support application for the Crow's Nest Southern Charter [hereafter cited as Brief], Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, Public Archives of Canada [herein after cited as PAC].
19. As well as the "Hanson Brothers", the investment group involved the Greenshields of Montreal, and "Gault". Possibly the latter was, indeed, the Galt family of Lethbridge. Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 1894, Volume II, pp. 6395-6402. The influence of these investors was probably reflected in the name change from the Crow's Nest Pass Mineral Company to the British Columbia Coal, Petroleum, and Mineral Company in 1893.
20. Brief, op. cit., PAC; Sarah McNellis, Copper King at War: The Biography of F. Augustus Heinze (n.p.: n.p., 1968). The option is mentioned by Heinze's biographer but no details are provided. Heinze had, of course, started a smelter at Trail and he also had a railway charter for a line from Trail to Penticton. Perhaps he foresaw connections between the Crow's Nest Pass and the Okanagan area.
21. Brief, op. cit., PAC; Calgary Herald, 3 March 1922; Victoria Daily Times, 25 May 1902. Fernie street names reflect the early investors in the coal company: Prior, Cox, Hanson, Jaffray, Rogers, Baker, Pellatt and Howland.

22. Lethbridge Herald, 14 February 1913, "George Mills Remembers."
23. Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 1896, pp. 3658-3670. John M. Gibbon, op. cit.; Martin moved to British Columbia and later became known for his support of J. J. Hill's Great Northern. His opposition to the C.P.R. is thus understandable.
24. Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 1896, pp. 3658-3670. If the extensive concessions and the danger of them going to the C.P.R. were not enough reason for federal disallowance, some felt the last usable pass through the Rockies should rest in government hands. Government construction, ownership and operation would also repay British Columbia the amount it felt its province had "overcontributed" to federal taxes.
25. Ibid., 1897.
26. R. E. Cail, "Disposed of Crown Lands in British Columbia, 1871-1912" (M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1956), p. 56.; Box 201, File 1982, Canadian Pacific Railway Papers [herein after cited as C.P.R. Papers], GAI; British Columbia, Statutes, 2 George V, Chapter 37. The British Columbia government, headed by R. McBride, bought back from the British Columbia Southern and the Columbia and Western Railway 4,065,076 acres at forty cents an acre for a total of \$1,626,030.40. Agreements Ledger, 1901-1907, Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company Papers, GAI. The company had become the Kootenay Coal Company, and finally the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company. As one observer noted, "though William Fernie and his associates acquired their holdings for a song, they sang, seventeen years ere they reaped the benefit of their bargain." J. Campbell Lewis and L. P. Sullivan, "The World Was His Country: Biography of Father Coccola," Manuscript 42, FSA. With its holdings of 200,000 acres, the Crow's Nest

Pass Coal Company dwarfed the largest Alberta Pass coal companies. Two of the largest Alberta companies, West Canadian Collieries and Leitch Collieries, each controlled between 12,000 and 15,000 acres of coal rights.

27. File GN 1-C-3-6F, Great Northern Railway Papers [herein after cited as G.N.R.P.], Minnesota Historical Society Archives [herein after cited as MHS].
28. Canada, Statutes, 1898, Chapter 90. Others involved in this rail line were: Elias Rogers and Henry S. Howland (Toronto); Thomas Hobbes (London); James H. Ashdown and Heber Archibald (Winnipeg); William Roper Hull and R. B. Bennett (Calgary). Feeling against the C.P.R. controlling the railway was strong in the area. A Fort Steele resident, F. Paget Norbury, observed in a letter home to his mother in England that "The railway through the Crow's Nest is still only in the wind, on account of the dog-in-the-manger policy of the C.P.R. who won't build the road themselves [sic] without some exorbitant concessions from the government and at the same time are strong enough and unprincipled enough to prevent any other company doing so." F. P. Norbury to his mother, 18 May 1897, F. P. Norbury Papers, FSA.
29. File GN 1-C-3-6F, G.N.R.P., MHS.
30. Ibid., As well, Rudolf R. Hoffman, formerly with Sherwin Williams Paint Co., Chicago, wrote the Great Northern, 28 June 1907, asking if they knew of "any bodies of shale, with coal, adapted to the manufacture of clay products such as sewer pipe, paving, brick and virtified hollow ware [glass] in the Crow's Nest Pass."
31. Sections one to ten miles in length excepting bridge work, ballasting, track-laying and station were given to

contractors building on the first 100 miles. In British Columbia, the C.P.R. built the tote road for construction supplies as well as for the clearing and grading. All other work was contracted out. Approximately 3,500 to 4,500 workmen were employed.

32. Canada, Sessional Papers 1899, no. 78, Return of Mr. Clute regarding two men dying on Crow's Nest Pass Railway; Ibid., 1898, No. 90A, Report of the Commissioners regarding the Crow's Nest Pass Railway; Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 1898, pp. 6593-6606.
33. F. P. Norbury to his father, 7 February 1898, FSA.
34. F. P. Norbury to his father, 27 September 1898, FSA.
35. Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 1898, pp. 7110-7113.
36. "Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company", Mining Record, 1899. Blakemore was formerly in charge of the Dominion Coal Mines, Nova Scotia. Undoubtedly, he was familiar with the miners he brought to Coal Creek.
37. Second Annual Report, 3 March 1899, Fourth Annual Report, 1 March 1901, and Brief, Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company Papers, GAI.

Production at the Crow's Nest Pass Company's Michel mine was 438 tons in 1899 and 11,162 tons in 1900. At the Morrissey mine, 200 men were employed on development work in 1901 and in 1902 the mine produced 46,292 tons. See C. B. Newmarch, Geology of the Crowsnest Coal Basin with Special Reference to the Fernie Area, (n.p.: British Columbia Department of Mines 1953).

38. Mining Record, February 1899. Unfortunately the rapid development would contribute to the horrendous 1902 explosion at Coal Creek that killed 137 miners.
39. Canada, Department of Interior, R.G. 15, Volume 95, File 76154 and R.G. 15, Volume 1189, File 50389, 14 September 1897, and Northern Administration Branch Papers, R.G. 85, Volume 1730, File 17515, PAC; Ian Turner, "Crowsnest Boundary Bungle", FSA. Syndicate members were G. E. Casey, Clarkson Jones, D. D. Mann, Charles J. Myles, W. R. Brock, S. F. McKinnon, John Flett, J. G. Jones, George Gillies, F. Wyld, J. S. Kingsmill, Bernard Jennings, and William McKenzie. Elliott T. Galt was also interested in British Columbia railways. From 1898 to 1901, he and Charles A. Magrath, H. S. Holt, and William D. Barclay held the British Columbia charter for the Arrowhead and Kootenay Railway Company. British Columbia, Statutes, Chapter 60, 47, 1898, and Chapter 65, 1901.
40. Lethbridge Herald, 18 July 1925, "C. A. Little Remembers". Little also tried to interest Galt and his manager, Peter Naismith, in coal property two miles north of present-day Coleman. However, their guide, Jack Willoughby, of the Long House Hotel, "proceeded to get very drunk, and it being about 40° below zero and very deep snow, the horses started home, much to the disgust of my guests and myself. I think it ruined my deal with Mr. Galt."
41. Ibid. S. W. Gebo hailed from Montana and appears to have had numerous occupations from coal operator to "electric light promoter" in Lewiston, Moore, and Judith Gap, Montana. Gebo owned coal rights in Luscar, and he eventually went to the Republic of Guatemala as a coal mine operator. Alberta, Certificate of Title, South Alberta Land Registration District, No. 3841A1, 20 September 1911, Land Titles Office,

Calgary; Blairmore Enterprise, 3 March 1910; Interview by William J. (Bill) Wilde, 76.137/2, Provincial Archives of Alberta [herein after cited as PAA]. Wilde delivered newspapers in the Pass for years and knew much about the area.

Henry L. Frank also came from Montana where he made his fortune in mining and smelting investments. Frank tried unsuccessfully for the Montana State Legislature and the United States Senate. He died in Calgary, 22 January 1911. Blairmore Enterprise, 25 October 1901, 20 April 1911.

Ownership of the Burmis coal rights that Little leased and then subleased to Gebo and Frank rested with a group of Americans from Washington State: Robert Ewart, a Hoquiam lumberman; Arthur L. Paine, a Spokane mining stock promoter; and D. L. Davenport of Aberdeen, Washington. Also involved were William Albert Foote and Maynard Havelock Cowan of Spokane.

There were close family connections between these and other investors in the Crow's Nest Pass. Robert Ewart's daughter married Charles P. Lund, the brother of Peter Lund who later shared ownership in the Lund and Breckenridge mine at Lundbreck. Ewart's wife was the daughter of John C. Davenport who may have been D. L. Davenport's brother. Blairmore Enterprise, 16 December 1909, 1 January 1910; Bellevue Times, 16 December 1909; Women's Institute of Alberta, op. cit., GAI; Calgary Herald Magazine, 14 September 1940; Box 201, File 1981, C.P.R. Papers, GAI; Bellevue Times, 16 December 1909. Gebo's shaft was reported on Section 14, Township 7, Range 3, W5.

42.

The Fernie Free Press, Crow's Nest Pass Illustrated, Souvenir Edition of the Fernie Free Press (n.p.: n.p., n.d.), Fernie Centennial Public Library; Lethbridge Herald, 11 December

- 1947; Blairmore Enterprise, 3 March 1910, 20 April 1911. Another source, George Mills, estimated the sale price at \$4,000, describing Pelletier as "Pilcher", Lethbridge Herald, 14 February 1913.
43. Frank Sentinel, 25 October 1901.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. R. Barnwell, "Western Coals", paper presented to C.P.R. officials, 21 May 1906, Field, British Columbia, Box 52, File 548, C.P.R. Papers, GAI.
47. Ibid.
48. Canada, Department of the Interior, R.G. 81, Volume 34, File 9-4-61, Fiftieth Anniversary Booklet of West Canadian Collieries, 1951, Dominion Coal Board Papers, PAC.
49. Ibid., Memorandum and Articles of Association of West Canadian Collieries, 2 April 1903, Box 6, File 57, West Canadian Collieries Papers, PAC.
50. Ibid., Fiftieth Anniversary Booklet of West Canadian Collieries, 1951, Dominion Coal Board Papers, PAC.
51. R. Barnwell, "Western Coals", op. cit.
52. Canada, Department of the Interior, R.G. 85, Volume 1747, File 22523, Dominion Coal Board Papers, PAC.
53. File 4467, G.N.R.P., MHSA.

54. W. F. McNeil, Association Secretary to T. W. Crothers, Minister of Labour, 8 January 1917, Western Coal Operators' Association Papers, GAI.
55. As well as conducting strikes, miner's unions oversaw medical attention given their members, and operated insurance plans for sickness, accidents and death benefits.
56. The most concise discussion of these markets is found in the published report of the 1925 Alberta Coal Commission.
57. The 1907 Alberta Coal Commission stressed the problem of inadequate car supply to the mines.
58. Blairmore Enterprise, 29 August 1912.
59. The C.P.R.'s second vice-president tried to induce the Department of the Interior to establish a National Park in the Crow's Nest Pass in July, 1897. The park would have drawn more tourist traffic over their rail lines in the Pass. The Department of the Interior declined. Box 221, File 2146, C.P.R. Papers, GAI; Alberta Coal Commission 1907, PAA.

Chapter I

"PEOPLE ARE CLAMOURING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COAL MINES"

1. Canada, House of Commons, Debates 189K, Volume II, pp. 6395-6402.
2. Butte Daily Miner, 17 August 1908; An Illustrated History of the State of Montana (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1894) p. 506; Cincinnati Enquirer, 18 January 1902, 1 August 1908; Federal Census for 1900, Montana Historical Society, Helena, Montana; Montana Daily Record, 18 August 1908.
3. Lethbridge Herald, 18 July 1925, "C. A. Little Remembers."
4. Ibid.; Seattle Post Intelligencer, 11 July 1940; Seattle Times, 11 July 1940; Wyoming State Tribune, 11 July 1940; Thomas A. L. Nicholas, "The Gebo Mine and Miners," Montana Historical Society; Blairmore Enterprise, 3 March 1910; Alberta, Certificate of Title, South Alberta Land Registration District, Caveat 3841AI, 20 September 1914, Land Titles Office, Calgary; Seattle Tribune, 8 February 1927, 12 July and 23 December 1940; Robert G. Raymer, Montana: The Land and the People. (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1930) Volume III, pp. 49-50; David Wasden, From Beaver to Oil, (Cheyenne, Wyoming: Pioneer Printing, 1973).
5. Newspaper clipping, n.d., unknown source, FSA; Canada, Department of the Interior, R.G. 81, Volume 34F File 9-4-61, Fiftieth Anniversary Booklet of West Canadian Collieries, 1901-1951, PAC.
6. Breckenridge owned some real estate in Calgary and a ranch east of the city. He probably contracted with the C.P.R. for

work in the irrigation district. He was also involved in the construction of the B. C. provincial highway to the Alberta border. Calgary Herald, June 1910 supplement.

7. Lund's children included Arthur who died in 1933, Edith of West Vancouver, Hazel who died at age 72 in Vancouver, and Roger who settled in Canim Lake, B. C. (Cariboo District) and later Palo Alto, California. Lund also had a sister, Lyell Darling of Vancouver, and a granddaughter, Mrs. Jean Wood, 3375 Seaforth Drive, Vancouver.

There is some discrepancy in reports concerning Lund's birthplace and date. Two sources cite 20 December 1864, and another lists 3 September 1848. Two sources give Christianstad, Sweden, as the birthplace, while one source gives Soarlen, Norway. Lund apparently died 1 January 1945, and was buried in Golden, B.C. Hilton Young Collection, FSA; Lethbridge Herald, 9 April 1935.

8. Hilton Young Collection, FSA; Agreements Ledger, 1901-1907, Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, GAI.
9. William Stuart Cameron, "Some We Have Known and Stories They Have Told" Creston Review, 1967.
10. Hilton Young Collection, FSA. Breckenridge and Lund had apparently built a small sawmill at Wardner in 1902; Crow's Nest Pass Lumber Company, Wardner File, FSA.
11. Canada, Department of the Interior, K.C.M.P. Papers, R.G. 85, Volume 1694, File 8134, PAC.
12. "History of North Idaho", Eastern Washington State Archives.
13. Ibid. McLaughlin was the son of Sir John McLaughlin, former

governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. Hill also owned the Porthill Inn; William Stuart Cameron, op. cit.

14. Lethbridge Herald, 1 December 1947; Vol. 16, File 143, United Mine Workers of America Papers, GAI.
15. Confusion exists concerning the career of C. P. Hill. A biography of another individual, C. A. Little, found in the Lethbridge Herald 18 July 1925 mirrors almost exactly that of C. P. Hill. Little credits himself with founding the Hillcrest Coal and Coke Company and with other events attributed to C. P. Hill. At this point no clear explanation can be accepted. Perhaps C. A. Little was a silent partner of C. P. Hill. It does seem curious that someone named Little would form the Hillcrest Coal Company.
16. Lethbridge Herald, 1 December 1941; Blairmore Enterprise, 29 February 1912.; The Fernie Free Press, op. cit.
17. Lethbridge herald, 1 December 1947. Hill also had business interests in Nome, Alaska; William Stuart Cameron, op. cit.; Kootenay Herald, 2 June 1900. The land, the east half of Section 18, Township 7, Range 3, W5 and the east half of Section 20, was acquired for \$12,200. Box 201, File 1984, C.P.R. Papers, GAI.
18. Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Reports, 1908, 1911, 1913, 1914, 1915 and 1916, PAA; R.G. 84, Consular Post Records, Fernie, B.C., National Archives, Washington. D.C. [herein after cited as NAW].
19. Spokesman Review, 20 January and 21 January 1948; W. G. Graves File, Clipping Files, Eastern Washington State Archives.

20. Jay P. Graves File, Clipping File, Eastern Washington State Historical Society Archives. Other Quebeckers had connections with the International Coal and Coke Company. Rodolphe Forget, M.P., one of Canada's early leading stockbrokers, was interested in the company by 1909. Financial Post, 30 October 1909, p. 1. Also from Quebec was William Farwell of Sherbrooke, president of International Coal and Coke for 1913 and 1914. Farwell was formerly president of the Eastern Townships Bank, a bank that Flumerfelt was also a director of, and probably the "eastern" bank at which another International executive, H. N. Galer, was trained. Other directors of the Granby Company from the United States were: George F. Baker, New York's First National Bank; Arthur Curtiss James, railway securities; Payne Whitney, New York; John Stanton; George M. Luther, Nicholls Copper Co.; J.B.F. Herreshoff, Nicholls Chemical Co.; W.A. Paine, Copper Range Co.; C.S. Houghton, Boston; Col. Higginson, banker, Boston; Oakley Thorne, New York; George Clark, Clark and Dodge; Dr. W.H. Nichols, Nichols Refinery; A. Langaloth, American Metal Company; S.H.C. Miner, Granby, Quebec; W.H. Robinson, Montreal. See also Spokesman Review, n.d. Jay P. Graves was also involved in a host of other business activities in Spokane and the Pacific Northwest. He organized the Spokane and Washington Improvement Co. which built many railways in the Spokane area. He was also convinced the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad to build through Spokane.
21. Annual Report, 1924, International Coal and Coke Company, GAI; Energy Resources Conservation Board, District Inspector Reports, File 880; Vancouver Province, 17 April 1906.
22. Canada, Department of the Interior, R.G. 85, Volume 1747, File 22523, Dominion Coal Board Papers, and R.C.M.P. Papers, R.G. 15, Volume 1251, File 447420, PAC.

23. Lethbridge Herald, 1 December 1947; William Stuart Cameron, op. cit.; Kootenay Herald, 2 June 1900; Box 201, File 1984, C.P.R. Papers, GAI.
24. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mines Files, Keith Coal Company, 23 March 1907, PAA.
25. Ibid., Files 76a and b, 20 October 1923; 17 December 1906, PAA; Blairmore Enterprise, 24 July and 28 August 1914; Victoria Colonist, 8 November 1906; Frank Paper, 2 July 1904; 2 May 1907. The International Coal and Coke Company acquired 650,000 shares of Alberta Coal and Coke while W. O. Appelquist, and Donald Macleod (and son) each retained 100,000 shares. In March 1914, ownership of the property was shared between Frank Morrison March, a "Spokane capitalist", and Homer N. Galer of Vancouver. Galer was formerly a vice-president of the International Coal and Coke Company and was involved in opening its Coleman mine in 1903.
26. Alberta, Certificate of Title, South Alberta Land Registration District, NW 1/4 12-7-3-5; SW 1/4 13-7-3-5; NE 1/4 14-7-3-5; NW 1/4 12-7-3-5, Land Titles, Calgary; Alberta, Mines Branch, Box 26, File 135a and b, 7 December 1907, PAA. The East Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company may have been a corporate expression of the property owners previously listed.
27. Blairmore Enterprise, 17 June, 30 June and 3 November 1910. John Herron, the local M.P., transferred \$12,800 in coal lease rental fees at one dollar per acre to the Department of the Interior on 18 May 1911 on behalf of Thomas Thomson, Wallace T. Eddy, Walter Gardner, W.N. Rowe and Miss Annie Rowe. Canada, Department of the Interior, R.C.M.P. Papers, R.G. 85, Volume 1817, File 62911, PAC.

28. Pincher Creek Coal Field, File 22-A-2-3B, Great Northern Railway Papers, MHSA. A later estimate (April 1917) put the total Great Northern investment at \$103,118.67. See also ibid., File 9168, Great Northern President subject files, MHSA. The latter source puts the purchase price of these lands at \$71,885.56.
29. Lethbridge Herald, 1 December 1947; William Stuart Cameron, op. cit.; Kootenay Herald, 2 June 1900; Box 201, File 1984, C.P.R. Papers, GAI.
30. The Fernie Free Press, op. cit.; Lethbridge Herald, 11 December 1947; Blairmore Enterprise, 3 March 1910 and 20 April 1911. Another source, George Mills, Lethbridge Herald, 14 February 1913, estimated the sale price at \$4,000, describing Pelletier as "Pilcher".
31. Alberta, Mines branch, Annual Reports, 1904, 1905, 1906, PAA.
32. Ibid., Annual report, 1935, McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company, PAA.
33. Ibid., Annual Report, 1924, International Coal and Coke Company, PAA.
34. Box 201, File 1984, 21 March 1904, C.P.R. Papers, GAI. These men included J. E. Lefurgay, G. W. Fowler, R. H. Pope, A. A. Lefurgay, M. P. Davis, McGaskill, McLean, Pringle, Thompson, Ryan, Farewell, George Taylor, Loss, Parker, Keith, G. A. Clare, Ball, McLeod, Griffin, Ponpore.
35. Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Reports, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1909, PAA; Ibid., Mine Files, Maple Leaf Coal Company and Mohawk Bituminous Mines, 18 November 1911, PAA.

36. Ibid., Annual Report, 1908, PAA.
37. Vancouver Province, 16 April 1906.
38. Canada, Department of the Interior, R.C.M.P. Papers, R.G. 81, Volume 34F, File 9-4-61, PAC; Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, West Canadian Collieries, Memorandum and Articles of Association of West Canadian Collieries, 2 April 1903, PAA.
39. W. W. Leach, "The Blairmore-Frank Coalfields," Geological Survey of Canada, Annual Report, New Series, Vol. XV, pp. 169-82; Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, Frank, 28 September, 9 November, and 31 December 1901, 31 December 1902, PAA; Frank Sentinel, 25 October 1901; Calgary Herald, 12 April 1906.
40. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, Lille, 17 April 1902, 12 February 1903, PAA; Calgary Herald, 31 July 1937. Three locomotives eventually ran on the line.
41. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, Lille, 27 August 1903, PAA.
42. Ibid., 21 December 1904; Ibid., Annual Report, 1905; The Fernie Free Press, op. cit.; Canada, Department of the Interior, R.C.M.P. Papers, R.G. 18 A1, Volume 315, File 203-06, April 1906 and August 1906; Box 201, File 1981, 1908, C.P.R. Papers, GAI.
43. Canada, Department of the Interior, R.C.M.P. Papers, R.G. 18 A1, Volume 315, File 203-06, August 1906, PAC; the Fernie Free Press, op. cit.
44. Dave Hutchison, Memoirs, Alberta Culture, Historic Sites Service, Lethbridge; Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, Hillcrest, 22 March 1906, PAA; Box 201, File 1984, 31 October 1908, C.P.R. Papers, GAI.

45. Dave Hutchison, op. cit.; Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Report, 1906, PAA.
46. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, Hillcrest, 7 February 1908, PAA; Box 201, File 1984, 30 December 1908, C.P.R. Papers, GAI. The grade on the outside tramway was 1 1/2 per cent in favour of the loaded cars and steam locomotives. Box 198, File 1956, 30 August 1906 to 17 April 1907, C.P.R. Papers, GAI; R.C.M.P. Papers, R.G. 87, Volume 5, File 36, Part 2, 1906, 1907 and 1908, PAC.
47. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, Breckenridge and Lund Coal Company, 15 February 1906, PAA.
48. Ibid., 25 January and 13 March 1910, 31 December 1911, PAA; Great Northern Papers, 10 February 1910.
49. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mines Files, Keith Coal Company Papers, 26 March 1904, 21 November 1907, 2 September 1908, 18 February 1909, 28 May 1909, 27 January 1910, 1 October 1910, 1 March 1911, 22 July 1911, 16 October 1911, and 11 January 1912.
50. Ibid., Maple Leaf Coal Company & Mohawk bituminous Mines, 26 November 1907, 12 March 1908, and 18 November 1911, PAA.
51. Blairmore Enterprise, 2 May 1912.
52. Alberta, Mines Branch, Box 26, File 153a and b, 16 May 1910, 16 August 1910, and 11 November 1913, PAA, and ibid., Annual Reports 1910, 1911; Bellevue Times, 7 October 1910; Blairmore Enterprise, 6 October 1910.
53. Alberta, Mines Branch, Box 26, File 153a and b, 16 May 1910, 2 November 1912. Also ibid., Annual Reports, 1909 and 1910.

This was an endless rope system, powered by a 40 H.P. D.C. 250 volt compound wound electric motor.; Bellevue Times, 2 December 1909; Blairmore Enterprise, 30 December 1909.

54. Blairmore Enterprise, 16 June 1912. The boilers and steam engine were of the "well known type of Lincoln, England." The two new Robey boilers were rated at 80 H.P. each, of "locomotive type." Alberta, Mines Branch, Box 26, File 153a and b, 2 November 1912 and ibid., Annual Report, 1912, PAA. To provide electric power, a 100 KW generator was purchased from the Canadian General Electric Company of Petersboro, Ontario. Blairmore Enterprise, 16 June 1912; 29 September 1912; Alberta, Mines Branch, Box 13, File 76a & b, October 1912 and, Box 26, File 153a and b, 2 November 1912, PAA. The generator was driven by a Robey 2 cylinder steam engine. The screen was manufactured by the Head, Weightson Company of Stockton on Tees, England. The capacity of the system was 100 tons in 8 hours. Blairmore Enterprise, 16 June and Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Report, 1912, and ibid., Box 13, File 76a & b, 1912, PAA. The engineer in charge of installing the machinery for the C. W. Stancliffe Company was a Mr. Rush. Blairmore Enterprise, 29 February, 16 June, 8 August, and 20 December 1912.
55. Energy Resources Conservation Board, District Inspector Reports, File 204a.
56. Ibid.
57. West Canadian Collieries Papers, Directors' Reports, 1910, GAI.

Chapter II

"MENACING PECULARITIES"

1. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings, Testimony of Arthur Wilson.
2. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mines Files, File 193, 5 March 1910.
3. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings, Testimony of Samuel Moore.
4. Ibid., Testimony of James Turnball, Alexander McLeod, and Henry Cooper.
5. R.C.M.P. Subject Files 1-606, 1874-1919, Volume 292, File 219-05, June, 1905.
6. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings, Testimony of Samuel Moore.
7. Ibid., Testimony of George Fraser.
8. R.C.M.P., Official Correspondence, Commissioner's Office, Indexes and Registers, 1876-1920, Volume 1503, 5 February 1902 and Volume 1620, 3 December 1909; Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 48, 2 December 1902, 11 July and 19 August 1905, PAA; Bellevue Times, 16 December 1909; Alberta, Department of the Attorney-General, Coroner's Files, 8 October 1917, PAA.
9. Cranbrook Herald, 4 November 1902.

10. Alberta Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 48, 30 July 1904, PAA.
11. Lethbridge Herald, 31 January 1906.
12. From 1901-1918, there were eight deaths at Frank known to have resulted from haulage accidents. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 48, PAA.
13. Ibid., File 48, 18 May 1904, PAA.
14. See ibid., File 48 for the years 1901-1908, PAA.
15. Ibid., File 48, Report of F. B. Smith, 1906, PAA.
16. Alberta, Department of the Attorney General, Inquest Files, File 357-374, 21 October 1907, PAA.
17. Ibid.
18. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 48, 1907, PAA.
19. Ibid., File 48, Secretary of Canadian Coal Consolidated Ltd., P. Brissoy, to A. L. Sifton, premier of Alberta, 20 September 1910, PAA.
20. Ibid., File 48, PAA.
21. Western Coal Operators Association, Joint Committee Findings, 1907-17, GAI.
22. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings.
23. R.C.M.P. Subject Files 1-606, 1874-1919, Volume 428 File 398-12, 24 July 1912.

24. Western Coal Operators Association, 1908.
25. R.C.M.P. Subject Files 1-606, 1874-1919, Volume 321, File 612-06, 15 July 1906.
26. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 88p, 3 May 1913, PAA; R.C.M.P. Subject Files 1-606, 1874-1919, Volume 438 File 137-13, November, 1913.
27. R.C.M.P. Subject Files 1-606, 1874-1919, Volume 321 File 612-06, 1 August 1906.
28. Ibid., Volume 525 File 55-17.
29. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 40g, 20 August 1914, PAA.
30. R.C.M.P. Official Correspondence, Commissioner's Office, Indexes and Registers 1876-1920, Volume 1845, File 2-0, October and December 1916; Canada, Department of Labour, Volume 299, File 3498, 22 May 1912, PAC.
31. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings, Testimony of Alexander McLeod.
32. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 193, 3 March 1913, PAA.
33. Frank Paper, 13 June 1907.
34. Ibid.
35. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 193, 25 April 1910, PAA; Bellevue Times 12 May 1910; West Canadian Collieries, Directors' Reports, File 57, 1910, GAI.

36. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 64, 29 October 1910 and 11 February 1911, PAA.
37. Blairmore Enterprise, 16 March 1911.
38. Ibid.
39. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, File 40j, 2 September 1908, 23 October 1908 and 19 February 1909, PAA.
40. Ibid., 22 May 1908, 30 September 1909, 8 September and 25 September 1908, 28 September and 30 September 1908, PAA.
41. R.C.M.P. Official Correspondence, Commissioner's Office, Indexes and Registers, 1876-1920. Volume 2475, 1 March 1908.
42. File 2, Minutes of Meeting, 22 October 1906, Western Coal Operators Association Papers, GAI; Charles MacMillan, "Trade Unionism in District 18, 1900-1925: A Case Study," (MBA thesis, University of Alberta, 1969), p. 105.
43. R.C.M.P. Subject Files, 1-606, 1874-1919, Volume 343, File 627-07, 12, 21, and 30 October 1907.
44. United Mine Workers of America, Volume 16, File 143, Testimony of C. P. Hill and Cory Weatherby, 2 June 1909.
45. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings, Testimony of O. E. S. Whiteside.
46. Ibid., Testimony of A. Wilson.
47. Ibid., Testimony of James Nicol.
48. G. L. Burland, "The International Coal and Coke Company's

- Colliery at Coleman, Alberta," Canadian Mining Institute Journal, 1909.
49. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings.
 50. Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Report, 1910, PAA.
 51. W. C. Roberts, "Preliminary Report of Property, The Leitch Collieries Ltd.", 14 July 1915.
 52. Blairmore Enterprise, 28 August 1914; Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Report, 1916, PAA.
 53. Blairmore Enterprise, 7 March, 16 June, and 18 July 1912; Lethbridge Herald, 6 June 1912; Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Reports 1906, 1909, and 1912, PAA.
 54. Blairmore Enterprise, 7 March 1912.
 55. Calgary Herald, 21 August 1919.
 56. R.C.M.P. Official Correspondence, Commissioner's Office. Indexes and Registers 1876-1920, Volume 1629, File 2, Part 2, 1910.
 57. Bellevue Times, 27 January and 10 February 1911.
 58. File 1953, Hillcrest, Box No. 198, C.P.R. Papers, GAI.
 59. The Alberta Coal Commission of 1907 stressed the problem of inadequate car supply to the mines.
 60. Lethbridge Herald, 1911.
 61. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings.

62. Frank Paper, 20 June 1907.
63. Ibid., 13 June 1907.
64. Blairmore Enterprise, 26 September 1913.
65. Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Report, 1913, PAA; Calgary Herald, 21 August 1919.

Chapter III

"PARIS AND NEW YORK HATS . . . DRESSES AND SILK WAISTS"

1. Frank Paper, 16 May 1907.
2. First Annual Report 1897, Crow's Nest Pass Coal and Coke Company, GAI.
3. Ibid., Agreements Ledger, 1901-1907, GAI.
4. Ibid., 20 June 1903, GAI.
5. Cranbrook Herald , 31 July 1902; Rossland World, 13 October 1902.
6. Cranbrook Herald, 10 July 1902.
7. Sixth Annual Report 1902, Crow's Nest Pass Coal and Coke Company, GAI.
8. Ibid., 18th Annual Report 1914, GAI.
9. Ibid., Agenda Book, Executive Committee Meetings, 2 October 1899, GAI.
10. Ibid., GAI.
11. Ibid., Minute Books, Special Committee Minute Book, 1902-1904, No. 5.
12. Box 201, File 1984, C.P.R. Papers, GAI; Blairmore Enterprise, 13 December 1912.

13. General Business Correspondence Files, February-March 1906, Box 53, File 415, Calgary Brewing and Malting Company Papers.
14. Frank Paper, 1 June 1905.
15. Despatch from the Consul of the United States in Fernie, B.C. 30 November, 1911, Consular Post Records, NAW.
16. Ibid., despatch from the Consul of the United States in Fernie, B.C. to American Secretary of State, 1910, NAW.
17. The Fernie Free Press, op. cit.; Consular Post Records, Fernie, B.C., NAW.
18. Frank Paper, 9 May 1907; Blairmore Enterprise, 12 September 1912.
19. Frank Paper, 16 May 1907; R.C.M.P. Official Correspondence, Commissioner's Office, Indexes and Registers, 1876-1920.
20. Pincher Creek Echo, 8 August 1913.
21. Blairmore Enterprise, 18 April 1912.
22. Ibid., 19 September 1912.
23. General Business Correspondence Files, February-March 1906, Box 53, File 415, Calgary Brewing and Malting Company Papers.
24. W. L. Hamilton to J. T. Stirling, 24 June 1912, Mrs. Jessie Symons, Calgary.
25. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings, Testimony of James Turnball.

26. Frank Paper, 1 July 1907; Bellevue Times, 30 December 1910, Blairmore Enterprise, 1 February 1912.
27. Alberta, Department of the Attorney General, Inquest Files, Files 357-374.
28. Bellevue Times, 30 December 1910.
29. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings, Testimony of Reese Evans.
30. Ibid., Testimony of James Nicol.
31. Ibid., Testimony of Aaron Moseley.
32. Ibid., Testimony of Edward Holmes.
33. Ibid., Testimony of A. R. Wilson.
34. R.C.M.P. Official Correspondence, Commissioner's Office, Indexes and Registers 1876-1920, Volume 1663, File 1912 No. 2, pt. 1.
35. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings, Testimony of George Fraser.
36. Ibid., Testimony of Homer N. Gaylor.
37. Ibid., Testimony of Robert McKay.
38. Pincher Creek Echo, 8 August 1913.
39. R.C.M.P. Subject Files 1-606 1874-1919, Volume 408, File 190-11, March 1911.

40. Ibid., April and May 1911.
41. Ibid., May 1911.
42. Coleman Union Minute Book, Volume 8, 1903-1909, 4 November 1905, 19 January 1908, 6 September 1908.
43. The Alberta Gazette, 1912, p. 196.
44. Blairmore Enterprise, 1 August 1912.
45. Ibid., 15 August and 7 November 1913.
46. Ibid., 16 May 1912. Other Frank men involved were Abraham Brown, Frank Vejprawa, W. Jolly, W. Bort, Henry Blas, Mike Laskuste, Vincent Bucha, and James Finlayson.
47. Blairmore Enterprise, 1 November and 15 November 1912.
48. Despatch from the Consul of the United States in Fernie B.C., 13 November 1911, Consular Post Records, NAW.
49. Alberta Liquor Control Board Papers; R.C.M.P. Official Correspondence, Commissioner's Office, Indexes and Registers 1876-1920, Volume 2475.
50. Blairmore Enterprise, 23 February and 31 August 1911. Howard sued the Blairmore Enterprise for its reporting on this incident. Report in Blairmore Enterprise, 23 February 1911.
51. R.C.M.P. Official Correspondence, Commissioner's Office, Indexes and Registers 1876-1920, Volume 1629, File No. 2, pt. 2, 1910; R.C.M.P. Subject Files 1-606 1874-1919, Volume 408, File 190-11, May 1911.

52. Alberta Liquor Control Board Papers.
53. Blairmore Enterprise, 29 September 1912.
54. "Early Days of Logging on the Crow," Hilton Young Collection, GAI.
55. Bellevue Times, 4 August 1910 and 10 February 1911; Blairmore Enterprise, 22 September 1910 and 26 September 1912.
56. Lethbridge Herald, 5 October 1957.
57. Alberta, Department of Attorney General, Inquest Files, File 863-959. There was also competition from company owned hotels.
58. Consular Post Records, Fernie, B.C., NAW.
59. Blairmore Enterprise, 11 January 1912.
60. Frank Paper, 1907
61. Alberta, Department of the Attorney General, Inquest Files; Blairmore Enterprise, 14 February, 17 July, 22 August, and 3 October 1912.
62. The Fernie Free Press, op. cit.
63. The Fernie Free Press, 11 March 1904; Blairmore Enterprise, 31 August 1911, 15 November 1912; Alberta Liquor Control Board Papers, 14 August 1906.
64. Blairmore Enterprise, 31 August 1911, 25 April and 2 May, 1912; F. W. Horway, Volume IV, p. 1263, 1914.

65. Blairmore Enterprise, 22 February 1912, 28 February 1913, Frank Paper 16 May 1907; Crowsnest Pass Historical Society, op. cit., pp. 615-623.
66. Alberta Coal Commission 1907, Proceedings, Testimony of Henry Cooper.
67. Ibid., Testimony of Alexander McLeod.
68. Alberta Statutes, 1907, Chapter 28; Blairmore Enterprise, 30 December 1909.
69. Blairmore Enterprise, 30 December 1909; Bellevue Times, 5 May and 23 June 1910.
70. Blairmore Enterprise, 7 January 1912.
71. Alberta Statutes, 16 February 1912. Authorized capital was to be \$500,000 with construction to start within one year and to be completed within five.
72. Blairmore Enterprise, 16 May 1912.
73. Blairmore Enterprise, 29 May 1914.
74. Lethbridge Herald, 29 November 1905.
75. Blairmore Enterprise, 22 February and 12 September 1912; Alberta, Department of the Attorney General, Inquest Files, p. 81; Bellevue Times, 28 October 1910.
76. Alberta, Department of the Attorney General, Inquest Files, p. 93.
77. Blairmore Enterprise, 17 March 1910, 7 December 1911, and 11 January 1912.

78. Blairmore Enterprise, 24 February and 17 March, 1910.
79. Alberta, Department of the Attorney General, Inquest Files, p. 227; Blairmore Enterprise, 22 February 1912.
80. Fernie Town Hall Records, Fernie Bylaw 105.
81. Blairmore Enterprise, 29 August 1913.
82. Blairmore Enterprise, 27 March 1914.
83. Blairmore Enterprise, 16 March 1911.
84. Blairmore Enterprise, 5 May 1910, 19 April and 29 August 1913; Bellevue Times, 2 December 1909; Great Northern Railway Papers, 17 April 1909.
85. Frank Paper, 30 May and 3 June 1907.
86. Frank Paper, 18 July 1907. The Rocky Mountain Cement Plant may have received a ten year tax exemption from the town of Blairmore; Alberta, Department of the Attorney General, Inquest Files p. 83.
87. Blairmore Enterprise, 14 March 1912, 18 July 1913, 13 March and 7 August 1914; Despatch from the Consul of the United States in Fernie, B.C., 1 June 1910 and 22 June 1911, Consular Post Records, NAW.

Conclusion

"THE REGRET OF MY LIFE"

1. Hamilton wrote to Cox, an investor in Leitch Collieries, in an attempt to explain his decision to spend a great deal of investment capital building coke ovens. He wrote, in part: "I note what you say about it being a pity so much money was spent in erecting the coke ovens, and I might say that it is the regret of my life that I advised building them. But previous to their being built there was all sorts of markets for coke . . . and I think what I advised at the time was just what any sane mining man would have done under the [sic] circumstances. . . ." W. L. Hamilton to J. A. Cox, 27 January 1914, Jessie Symons, Calgary.
2. Canada, Department of the Interior, Volume 1747, File 22523, Dominion Coal Board Papers, PAC.
3. Ibid., PAC.
4. Crow's Nest Pass Coal and Coke Company, Seventh Annual Report, 1903, PAC.
5. Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Report 1906, PAA; Alberta, Certificate of Title, South Alberta, Land Registration District HM78 for NW 1/4, 26-7-2-W5, Land Titles, Calgary.
6. Alberta, Mines Branch, Boxes 11 and 12, Files 59a-c, 21 November 1907 and ibid., 1907, PAA.
7. Ibid., Mine Files, Maple Leaf Coal Company and Mohawk Bituminous Coal Company, 18 November 1911, PAA.

8. Blairmore Enterprise, 16 June 1912.
9. Alberta, Mines Branch, Annual Reports, 1909-1914; Great Northern Railway Papers, Geology Department, File 2362, 14 August 1916, MHSA; Calgary Herald, 3 March 1922.
10. Lethbridge Daily Herald, 6 June 1912; Blairmore Enterprise, 18 July 1912; R.C.M.P. Subject Files, 1-606 1874-1919, Volume 33, 16 June 1912.
11. Cranbrook Herald, 28 May 1903; Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, Frank, 30 October 1908 and 28 April 1909, PAA.
12. Box 201, File 1981, 4 June 1906, C.P.R. Papers, GAI.
13. Great Northern Railway Papers, Geology Department, File 2362, 14 August 1916, MHSA; Calgary Herald, 3 March 1922.
14. Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1976), pp. 98-99, as quoted from Canada Year Book, 1932 (Ottawa, 1933), p. 103.
15. W. L. Hamilton to J. R. Cox, 27 January 1914, Jessie Symon, Calgary.
16. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, Breckenridge and Lund, 23 May 1911, PAA.
17. Blairmore Enterprise, 1, 15, and 22 June 1911.
18. Alberta, Mines Branch, Mine Files, Keith Coal Company, 11 January 1912, PAA.
19. Ibid., Mine Files, Breckenridge and Lund, 31 December 1911, PAA.

20. Crow's Nest Pass Coal and Coke Company, Fifteenth Annual Report, 1911, PAC.
21. Western Coal Operator's Association, Minute Books, 1906-1911, Box 1, File 2, 12 January 1912, GAI.
22. Brown and Cook, op. cit., p. 199.

Figure 1:

Mining regions of southern British Columbia

Figure 2:

C. N. Wellman's grading outfit, Coal Creek section

Crow's Nest Pass, May 20, 1898

(Fort Steele Historic Park Archives)

Figure 3:

The Crow's Nest Pass coal area, Alberta

Figure 4:

H. L. Frank. No date

(Montana Historical Society)

Figure 5:

Jules J. Fleutot, 1892

(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

Figure 6:

Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Hamilton at Passburg, Alberta, c.1900

(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

Figure 7:

Tunnel, No. 1 mine in Hillcrest, Alberta. No date.

(Crowsnest Pass Historical Society)

Figure 8:
Construction of coke ovens at Leitch Collieries,
Passburg, 1910
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

Figure 9:
Map of Hillcrest Mine
(Provincial Archives of Alberta)

Figure 10:
At the coal face
(Public Archives of Canada)

Figure 11:
Hillcrest surface plant
(Crowsnest Pass Historical Society)

Figure 12:
Interior of a tipple with Marcus screen
and picking table
(Public Archives of Canada)

Figure 13:
General view of Bellevue Collieries, 1929
(Public Archives of Canada)

Figure 14:
Tipple at Mohawk Colliery
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

Figure 15:

McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company tipple
(Provincial Archives of Alberta)

Figure 16:

Interior at Thompson's store, Blairmore, c.1912
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

Figure 18:

Coleman, Alberta, 1911
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)

Figure 19:

Belly up to the bar, boys!
(Glenbow-Alberta Institute)